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This past May, it was all about *Sith*. We thought we'd throw together a little worldwide scrapbook to celebrate the occasion.



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A Family Affair

Last issue, I ended my letter with my brain abuzz and full of *Revenge of the Sith*. Even though it's been nearly two months since the film's release, my brain is still buzzing. Like many of you, I was completely satisfied with how everything wrapped up. I thought Anakin's motives were justified; I didn't begrudge the Jedi for not being able to sense that Palpatine was indeed a Sith Lord (come on, the guy is the ultimate evil for cryin' out loud); and while we the audience didn't get the answers to all our questions, I thought George Lucas left enough there for us to use our imaginations and draw our own conclusions.

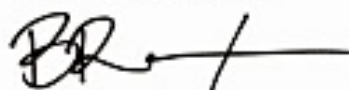
For me personally, though, the completion of the saga means more than just seeing the final duel between Master and apprentice, more than just seeing Anakin finally falling from grace, and more than just seeing inevitable events take place. I won't go so far as to say that it signals the end of a long chapter in my life, because as we all know, *Star Wars* is forever. Rather, I was hit with a strong feeling of nostalgia relating to my experiences upon seeing each of the six films—where I saw them, who I saw them with, and how excited I was. What was unique about *Revenge of the Sith* is that it was the first prequel film that let me meld my past with the present, and the more I thought about *Sith*, the more I began to realize that the entire experience—from the first three films to the last three films—was about family.

When George Lucas made *Star Wars*, he made it because he wanted to create a fun movie for children to enjoy. As stated in the great DVD documentary *Empire of Dreams*, there wasn't a whole lot to be upbeat about back in the 1970s, and the films of the era were certainly a reflection of that as most centered on disasters, catastrophic situations, or anti-heroes. Yet Lucas' epic space opera changed all that as suddenly there was something both parents and their children alike could enjoy. People of all ages waited in lines that stretched around blocks and beyond. From that point forward, the ritual of attending screenings of *Star Wars* films became commonplace with many families. And 28 years later, it's a ritual that is still alive.

I was introduced to *A New Hope* by my father, and it was one of the most memorable days of my life. For the release of *Sith*, I returned the favor by taking him to see Episode III, in a sense completing a circle of my own. As we waited for the film to begin, I sat there with a childlike smile reflecting back to that warm afternoon in the summer of 1977, feeling like I had taken a trip back in time. To add even more meaning to the day, legendary artist Ralph McQuarrie sat down right next to me. I just couldn't believe my good fortune as it was a totally random occurrence. And it was all due to *Star Wars*.

I began to think about why this particular series of films means so much to so many people, aside from the great characters, timeless story, and high sense of adventure that the audience gets from each episode. Again, I found the answer rooted in the context of family—kids who grew up in the 1970s enamored with the original trilogy now have families of their own to share their love of *Star Wars*, thanks in large part to the prequels. In this day and age there's not much out there that inspires the same sense of togetherness as these films do, and it's truly amazing that the saga has been around long enough to give two generations of fans something to share and cherish together. That fact alone is worth the price of admission.

Brett Rector, Editor-in-Chief



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What Is Up with Darth Plagueis and Anakin?

I AM YOUR...FATHER?

While reading the excellent exclusive interviews with Hayden Christensen and Ian McDiarmid in Issue 82, I began thinking that Sidious may have been finishing up a sequence of events that was started by his own mentor.

In *Revenge of the Sith*, Chancellor Palpatine recounts the legend of a great Sith Lord, Darth Plagueis who could manipulate midi-chlorians to create life as well as keep someone from dying. It occurred to me that this Sith Lord was most likely Sidious' mentor, and that it was he who "created" Anakin.

Am I alone in this line of thinking? Does anyone else have the same impression? Keep up the great work!

—Paul Watters, Inuvik, Canada

Your observation of the situation is certainly a very valid one, and no, you are not alone in your thinking. In his talk with Anakin at the Galaxies Opera House, Chancellor Palpatine hinted very convincingly that the Sith Lord Darth Plagueis had found a way to manipulate midi-chlorians to create life. However, the dialogue exchange between Palpatine and Anakin leaves many things open to interpretation, and it is unknown if we'll ever know the full truth. But who knows? Someone just might write a story about it in the future... but we certainly can't make any guarantees.

COVER TO COVER COVERAGE

I've been reading *Star Wars Insider* since I was 8 years old (I'm now 15) and this is my first time writing to you guys, although I've thought about doing so a few times before. First of all, I was a bit skeptical about the big switch in publishers as I had grown quite attached to the old magazine, but Issue 82 totally changed my mind. This is by far my favorite issue of *Insider*, which I read cover to cover—every article, and every word—and I loved your *Celebration III* coverage. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to attend *CIII* because the last day of the show happened to fall on the first night of Passover. When I read about it online and saw scattered clips on television I was even more upset that I couldn't make the trip. But then I read about the coverage in my favorite magazine and I suddenly felt like I was there.

The "Vehicles of Episode III" feature was also great—I actually went out and bought

Incredible Cross-Sections just so I could see more! My favorite parts of the magazine were definitely the interviews, particularly the one with Ian McDiarmid—he is truly a spectacular actor and by far the best performer in Episode III. Because of him, I'm now constantly debating with fellow fans that Darth Sidious is cooler than Darth Vader! I hope we see Sidious in action in the upcoming television show as a recurring character, a cameo appearance, or even a background guy—it doesn't matter to me, just seeing him in there would be cool. Lastly, my absolute favorite section in every issue of *Insider* is "Ask the Master," mainly because I get the opportunity to expand my *Star Wars* knowledge.

Anyway, I know this is somewhat old as you're already on your fourth issue as the new publishers of *Insider*, but I remember you asking fans to send in their comments about the new layout, changes made to the magazine, and any suggestions in general, so here goes.

As I said above, the new design is great. I particularly love the Aurabesh near the titles—it's subtle, but noticeable. My friend, who's a pretty big fan, didn't know what "those weird symbols" meant until I explained them. I think it would be great if you included an Aurabesh guide in an upcoming issue.

Now that Episode III is out and the movie saga is over, I think it might be a good idea to include more info on the Expanded Universe, such as an in-depth timeline. I also recommend republishing the map of the galaxy from Issue 65, but updated to include Episode III, the Clone Wars novels and cartoons, as well as the New Jedi Order.

I could go on for another few paragraphs, but I think you've heard enough from me for one letter. Keep up the great work!

MTFBWY!

—Jared Brenner, Princeton, NJ

We would like to thank you for sticking with us after the change. However, we must point out that we have produced seven issues of *Insider* (including the one you have in your hot little mitts) as well as three collector books: one that was available at Best Buy when the original trilogy DVDs were released as well as the official *Revenge of the Sith* movie guide and the ultimate Vader guide (both of which can be ordered only by logging

onto IDG's web site at idgentertainment.com/ep3guide and idgentertainment.com/vader).

But enough shameless promotion, we're just happy you enjoy reading the magazine, and we're especially happy to hear you liked the articles, including our *Celebration III* coverage. Mary Franklin, editor of *Bantha Tracks* and *Fan Specialist* extraordinaire, did a great job with the report.

And thanks for your content suggestions. We love to hear about what readers would like to see in print, and if the ideas are viable, we'll certainly do what we can to make them happen. Just to let you know, the Aurabesh guide is something we have seriously considered, so stay tuned....

IN SEARCH OF GREATER KNOWLEDGE

To be honest with you, I don't read a lot of Expanded Universe material—not because I don't like to, mind you, it's just that my school and family life is a bit too hectic. However, I still like to keep up on what's going on by reading your magazine and the posts on various forums and talking with fellow fans.

In 1998, Stephen J. Sansweet wrote an entire encyclopedia covering the original trilogy and the EU material as it existed at that time. Because of all the new information and stories that have been generated since that book was published, can we expect to see an updated volume anytime soon? I would love to read about all the added characters as well as gain some more insight into the history of established characters like Anakin and Obi-Wan.

Additionally, is Lucas planning on re-making the original trilogy? I have heard so many rumors, but I cannot imagine Lucas doing anything like this. Thanks for your time, and May the Force be with You.

—Matthew Roche, via Internet

Over the past year, we've received a number of letters asking the same question about the possibility of an updated encyclopedia. In speaking with Mr. Sansweet we can say that there are definitely plans to publish such a book, which will include information about the prequel films, Expanded Universe, and the like. As for a release date, well, that's something not even Yoda can foresee. You can rest assured that once we know something, we'll pass along that info to you.



As for Lucas re-making the original trilogy, all we can say is that he plans to release the original *Star Wars* trilogy in 3D as soon as there are enough digital theaters in the U.S. and abroad to cover the expense of the conversion as well as distribution.

MORE THAN JUST STAR WARS

I'm a relatively new member of the fan club—officially—but I am a longtime fan of Lucas and his other films. While reading issues of Insider at a friend's house a few years ago, I remember seeing articles about Indiana Jones as well as other Lucasfilm projects like Willow. Don't get me wrong, I love the new look of the magazine and will continue to read it cover to cover. However, I miss many things the old magazine had. I was at Celebration III and was fortunate enough to listen to Lucas and McCallum both get excited about the next Indiana Jones film, and I even heard talk that Willow 2 might get made. So, is there any chance that some of the old topics will make a return to the magazine?

—Jason Mattson, Iron River, MI

Despite the fact this little old magazine is entitled *Star Wars Insider*, it doesn't mean we won't cover topics related to Lucasfilm as a whole. As

you can imagine George Lucas hasn't had much time in the last few years to devote to any other projects. However, now that *Revenge of the Sith* and his second trilogy are now complete, we can look forward to other projects from the esteemed filmmaker, one of which is the next Indiana Jones film. Once details start rolling out about that, as well as anything else he might be cooking up, you can bet that you'll see in-depth coverage here.

SO...WHAT'S NEXT

In issue 82 you said that George Lucas is going to make a television show that takes place between Episode's III and IV. I was just wondering if it was going to be animated like Clone Wars or if it was going to be a live-action show with real actors? And if it is going to be the latter, will they be the same cast from the movies, or all new people?

By the way, your magazine is the best!!!
—Kyle Tobin, Moreno Valley, CA

Truth be told, Lucas is looking into both a live-action show as well as a new animated program, which is something all *Star Wars* fans can get excited about. Unfortunately, not too many details are known at this time. What we can say is that Lucasfilm Animation is now gearing up to

produce a CG animated series that will air in the not too distant future.

CUCKOO FOR CLONES

First of all, I have to tell you guys that your magazine is brilliant. Anyway, in the last issue it was stated that a future article would show various clone troopers, and I have to say I was only a little disappointed that it wasn't in the most recent issue. While you're working on that article (you better), please put in all the clone commanders, clone legions, and even the old clones and ARC troopers. That'd be cool!

—Nick, via Internet

Whoa, hold on there a minute, cowboy! Good things always come to those who wait. But since you insist on knowing, that little article you are referring to will be featured in the next issue of *Insider*, and is to be authored by none other than Karen Traviss, with a little help from co-author Ryan Kaufman, a former LucasArts' alum. And don't you worry about the content—we're going to give you the skinny on the clones you saw in the films as well as those that are a part of the Expanded Universe, like the Republic Commandos and ARC troopers. ☺

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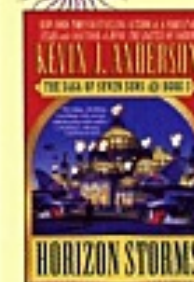
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In a galaxy not so far away—Los Angeles to be exact—a gathering to rival a Senate meeting on Coruscant took place on June 10. But rather than mull over political minutia, this gathering was held to honor the man who brought wonderment and excitement back to movies in that far away summer of 1977. And it has been quite a ride since.

Acclaimed filmmaker and *Star Wars* creator George Lucas became the 33rd recipient of the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award, one of Hollywood's top honors, from the American Film Institute (AFI) at a black-tie dinner held at the Kodak Theater. While there was certainly an impressive guest list, the evening definitely belonged to Lucas.

During the event, many colleagues, collaborators, and friends took the stage to add a few words about Lucas. Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher (Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia respectively) both reflected on the impact that those first films had on their lives, with Fisher good-naturedly ribbing the director for the merchandizing empire he created, which included her likeness on everything from shampoo bottles and Pez dispensers to dolls and action figures.

"People are still asking me if I knew it was going to be that big of a hit," Fisher said of *Star Wars: A New Hope*. "Yes, we all knew. The only one who didn't was George."

Harrison Ford, who played smuggler/scoundrel Han Solo and world-famous archeologist Indiana Jones, quipped he couldn't get a meeting with Lucas during the casting for *Star Wars*, mentioning that he was never the filmmaker's first choice for either role.

Collaborator and friend Steven Spielberg presented Lucas with the award, saying that Lucas' impact on the science-fiction genre rivaled that of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. "You have many years ahead of you to create the dreams that we can't even imagine dreaming," Spielberg said. "You have done more for the collective unconscious of this planet than you will ever know."

Lucas, who recently turned 61, said he was "honored and bewildered" considering that in his mind he has only made three movies: *THX 1138*, *American Graffiti*, and the six *Star Wars* episodes, which he views as one long movie.

Wondering aloud about who would come to the ceremony, Lucas stated he "halfway expected to have a room full of stormtroopers and Princess Leia's."

Lucas wasn't to be disappointed on one count. Fellow star warrior William Shatner, known better as his television alter ego Captain James T. Kirk, made a surprise appearance onstage to perform a variation of "My Way," accompanied by a chorus line of stormtroopers. "Live long," Shatner told Lucas. "You've already prospered enough."

Lucas kept the humor coming by poking fun at his reputation for bad dialogue by thanking mentor Francis Ford Coppola for helping him to hone his writing skills. "He took me from not being able to write a word in terms of writing screenplays to being the king of wooden dialogue," Lucas said.

Lucas took a more serious tone toward the end as he offered thanks to Spielberg, Coppola, and other colleagues, stating he has no idea what he would have done with his life had he not gotten involved with filmmaking. "I'm extremely grateful that I discovered my passion. I love movies," Lucas said. "I love to watch them, I love to make them."

SITH SETS BOX OFFICE RECORDS

As *Revenge of the Sith* marched its way into theaters on May 19, it signaled the final film in a saga that spanned 28 years. Yet not even with that in mind did anyone think it would have such a huge opening weekend. Not only did *Sith* break every record in the book in the United States, it spanned the globe to crush international records as well. And here are the numbers to prove it:

- The midnight showings alone on May 19 grossed \$16.9 million, which is the biggest tally ever.
- The first-day gross of \$50 million was the biggest single day in movie history (beating the previous record of \$44.5 million grossed by *Shrek 2*).
- The film earned more than any other film in its first two days by grossing \$83.8 million, more than any film in its first three days by grossing \$124.7 million, and more than any film in its first four days by grossing \$158.5 million, beating the previous record of \$134 million held by *Matrix Reloaded*.
- And at \$158.5 million, *Sith* grossed more in its first four days than *Spider-Man* did in its first five days.

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- And just in case you're wondering, *Sith* significantly outgrossed the opening four-day tallies for *The Phantom Menace* (\$83.7 million) and *Attack of the Clones* (\$110 million).
- The film's international gross of \$144.7 million was an opening weekend record-setter overseas as well.

And when it all was said and done, the worldwide gross for Episode III was an astounding \$303.2 million—after only four days of its release!

STAR WARS THE SHOW EXHIBITS IN ITALY

To celebrate the Italian opening of *Revenge of the Sith*, La Triennale di Milano unveiled a new exhibition called *Star Wars The Show*, which explores the entire *Star Wars* saga—May 13 through August 28, 2005. La Triennale is a museum focused on art, design, and architecture—and the exhibition reflects those strong points in the films. Many objects are being seen for the first time, and this occasion marks the debut for this *Star Wars* exhibition in Europe. It will move on to France this fall. Drawings, production paintings, blueprints, models, furniture, props, and costumes are on display in a 13,000-square-foot exhibit that brings together over 200 original pieces from the Lucasfilm archives.

Star Wars The Show pays tribute to the making of all six movies in the saga, complete with footage from the final episode, *Revenge of the Sith*. The exhibit also focuses on the beauty and power of *Star Wars* thanks to elaborate costumes and models that are tangible examples of the 30 years of effort that have gone into creating these immensely popular movies.

The central part of the show is represented by models, costumes, and objects used on the sets of the six movies, including authentic costumes for C-3PO, Darth Vader, and Queen Amidala. The exhibit also includes original models of spacecraft created by Industrial Light & Magic, and maquettes of the numerous and fantastic characters created by filmmaker George Lucas and his team.

Another section of the extensive exhibit explores the collaboration between Lucas and the artists who interpreted his visions in pre-production artwork—including drawings and paintings by Ralph McQuarrie, Doug Chiang, Ryan Church, and Erik Tiemens.

The show also illustrates the development of the films from conceptual designs to models—from computer rendering to final composed images. Design and architecture constitutes a large part of the exhibit, with a particular importance given to Italy's Lake Como setting in Episode II.

Additionally, the exhibit looks at the innovative changes the movies have made to the cinematic arts, along with the evolution of all-digital production techniques.

La Triennale worked with ArtEutopia of Milano to bring the exhibition to life. The design of *Star Wars The Show*, created by Alexander Pedretti, allows for objects to be placed in a setting that gives attendees the full impact of how the costumes and props effect the films. Video clips and sound effects from the six episodes provide an exciting backdrop to the awe-inspiring exhibit.

Additional exhibit information:

Star Wars The Show

May 13—August 28, 2005

www.triennale.it

Curator and production: Triennale di Milano, ArteUtopia Milan in conjunction with Lucasfilm Ltd, San Francisco

EPISODE III SOUNDTRACK MAKES HISTORY

Sony Classical's original soundtrack recording of *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*, the last episode of the massively popular *Star Wars* saga, hit the stores on May 3, and it immediately began making sales history. The CD features a new score by five-time Oscar winner John Williams, who is also the composer and conductor of the score for each movie in the six-chapter *Star Wars* saga, and it is packaged with an exclusive collector's DVD—*Star Wars: A Musical Journey*—an unprecedented bonus at no additional cost.

Created especially to accompany the CD release, the thrilling 70-minute Bonus DVD features 16 brand-new music videos set to selections from all six of John Williams' unforgettable *Star Wars* movie scores and has been designed around a timeline that will take the viewer chronologically through the entire saga. The DVD is hosted by *Star Wars* actor Ian McDiarmid.

Star Wars: Episode III: Revenge of the Sith, becomes the third *Star Wars* soundtrack to debut in the top 10 of the *Billboard* 200 chart—a new record. Previously, two *Star Wars* soundtracks held that distinction in a three-way tie with the two *Spider-Man* soundtracks and two *American Idol* soundtrack collections.

The *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith* soundtrack also becomes the fifth *Star Wars* soundtrack to reach the top 10 of the *Billboard* 200. This extends a pop chart album record, long held by the *Star Wars* series, among film and TV soundtracks. With the exception of *Star Wars: Episode VI Return of the Jedi* (originally released in 1983), all of the *Star Wars* soundtracks have made the top 10.

Information about the original motion picture soundtrack for *Revenge of the Sith* is featured at starwars.sonyclassical.com.

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II COMING TO THE PSP



Xbox screens shown



The epic scale of sprawling *Star Wars* battlefields will be made portable as *Star Wars Battlefront II* is being developed for the Sony PSP. At the Electronic Entertainment Expo this past May, LucasArts announced the PSP version of *Battlefront II* will be joining the Xbox, Playstation2, and PC versions for release this Fall.

Though other companies have made portable *Star Wars* games in the past, this marks the first time LucasArts has published a handheld game. "Titles for the revolutionary new handheld systems are something we know gamers want,

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE ON PAGE 76:

"STILL MORE SONGS FROM THE MOS EISLEY CANTINA"





and we're excited to enter this field," said Jim Ward, President of LucasArts.

The PSP game, developed by Savage Entertainment, will have thrilling ground and space combat, playable Jedi, and Episode III content like its more stationary incarnations, but the portable version will have unique features tailored for the "on-the-go" nature of the handheld system. This includes several unique mini-campaigns. Wi-Fi compatibility allows up to four players to join in at once, either competitively or cooperatively. They can also partake in the classic Instant Action mode that plunges them into the thick of their favorite Star Wars battles to play any way they want to.

While LucasArts is gearing up for new titles based on the cutting edge systems just beyond the horizon, they haven't forgotten about the systems already in place. "It's important to recognize that current systems are still very relevant and that the PC platform remains as strong as ever," said Peter Hirschmann, Vice President of Product Development.

Star Wars Battlefront II, the sequel to last year's smash hit, ramps up the open-ended single- and multi-player action/shooter excitement with space combat, playable Jedi, and never-

before-seen environments from *Revenge of the Sith*. For gamers who prefer to play solo, an all-new single-player experience takes them on an epic story-based adventure that spans worlds.

KAREN TRAVISS TO PEN SEQUEL



Fans of hard-hitting specialty-clone military literary action have reason to cheer as author Karen Traviss is set to continue the Republic Commando adventures

(inspired by LucasArts' *Star Wars Republic Commando* video game) in a new mass market paperback due for release in spring 2006.

Star Wars Republic Commando: Triple Zero—the sequel to *Star Wars Republic Commando: Hard Contact*—is set a year after the battle of Geonosis, and follows the continuing missions of Omega Squad. As the Clone Wars casualties mount, the commandos find themselves deployed on increasingly dangerous missions that take

them beyond the battlefield and further into sabotage and intelligence operations in the heart of Separatist territory. Newly promoted Jedi Generals Etain Tur-Mukan and Bardan Jusik are also catapulted into front line combat roles and find themselves identifying strongly with the clone soldiers under their command, who turn out to be anything but predictable cannon fodder.

Omega Squad survives a close brush with disaster to end up in the most potentially dangerous hot spot in the galaxy—pursuing a Separatist terror group in the skylands and underworld of Coruscant itself, known as Triple Zero in the Grand Army's slang because its galactic chart co-ordinates are 000. And, as any soldier knows, urban operations on your own turf can be the most deadly of all. So it's just as well that Omega Squad finds itself working with Delta Squad, and teamed up again with Etain and Jusik. They also find their legendary training sergeant Kal Skirata and his secret military intelligence unit of "Null" ARC troopers, the black ops team that even the Kaminoans thought were too dangerous to unleash. It's a critical mission unlike anything any of them have ever tackled—and it tests their friendship and courage to the limit. ☺

Photo by Mark Wingfield



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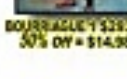
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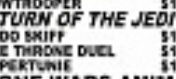
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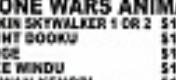
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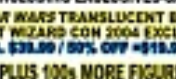
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Birth of the Empire

JAMES LUCENO TELLS THE FIRST TALE OF A DARK TIME

The conclusion of *Revenge of the Sith* sees the fallen Jedi once known as Anakin Skywalker trapped in the black armor that will preserve his life for decades and hide his original identity from a galaxy that knows him only as Darth Vader, Dark Lord of the Sith. As moviegoers, we next encounter Vader above Tatooine, striding through the smoky ruin of Princess Leia's *Tantive IV* on Emperor Palpatine's grim business. But what happens in the decades between Episodes III and IV? It has fallen to veteran *Star Wars* author James Luceno to tell the first story of the dark times.

Dark Lord: The Rise of Darth Vader (Del Rey, \$25.95) begins on the Outer Rim world of Murkhana with Order 66 transmitted to clone troopers advancing with the Jedi against Separatist positions. But on Murkhana, a clone commando refuses to obey orders, giving Jedi Roan Shryne and Padawan Olee Starstone a chance to hide. Unfortunately for clones and Jedi alike, Palpatine dispatches Vader to Murkhana to investigate the incident.

While Vader is a formidable foe in *Dark Lord*, he is yet to become the character we know from *A New Hope*. "I spent a lot of time thinking about what Anakin's emotional state was in what I considered to be a transitional period," Luceno says. "There's a touch of Anakin left, but the dark side has possessed him."

It's not that Vader has regrets, Luceno says; rather, he's angry and confused, all too aware he's been manipulated by Darth Sidious. The new Sith apprentice's evolving relationship with Sidious is a key subplot of the book.

"It just struck me that the Sith would have to be constantly at each other's throats," Luceno says, adding that "I kept thinking about Edgar Allan Poe. I kept thinking he would appreciate the Sith on some level—there's a great gothic quality to the entire dark side."

Speaking of gothic doings, readers may be surprised by Vader's struggles with his prosthetic limbs and his life-preserving armor. Few of the suit's systems work properly at first—a particular frustration for a boy from Tatooine who could work mechanical marvels and a situation Luceno imbues with a certain grim humor.

Luceno says those scenes were inspired in part by a talk with former LucasArts writer Ryan

Kaufman, who donned Vader's armor to serve as a reference for shots in the *Revenge of the Sith* video game. "He told me what it felt like to have that thing on, and I worked with his description of what it's like to be inside the suit," Luceno recalls. "I just ran with it."

Not that *Dark Lord* is all psychological—far from it. Shryne and Starstone struggle to escape the reach of the new Empire and keep the Jedi traditions alive, with Vader in furious pursuit. We see the Empire's devastation of Kashyyyk with Vader swinging his saber and a certain Wookiee in the middle of the battle. We get to sit in on some of the first meetings between Vader and Moff Tarkin. And we visit Alderaan, where Bail Organa tries to solve the riddle of Vader's identity—and keep the new Sith Lord away from his infant stepdaughter and a certain pair of droids.

After writing prequels (*Cloak of Deception*, set before Episode I), cliffhangers (two of his three New Jedi Order titles) and lead-ins (*Labyrinth of Evil*, which ends just as Episode III begins), Luceno says he enjoyed the freedom of a book that didn't have to set up another book or a movie, or safeguard the saga's secrets. "The whole book felt liberating in the sense that everything is known now," he says.

For all that, however, *Dark Lord* was a challenging assignment. The book took shape as George Lucas was working on Episode III, meaning *Dark Lord* had to change as Lucas' ideas for the final film of the *Star Wars* saga changed.

The original idea, Luceno says, was to tell the story of the Jedi Purge and the beginnings of the Rebellion. But when the Jedi Purge wound up onscreen in *Revenge of the Sith*, Luceno says that "I realized the book they pitched to me could not work."

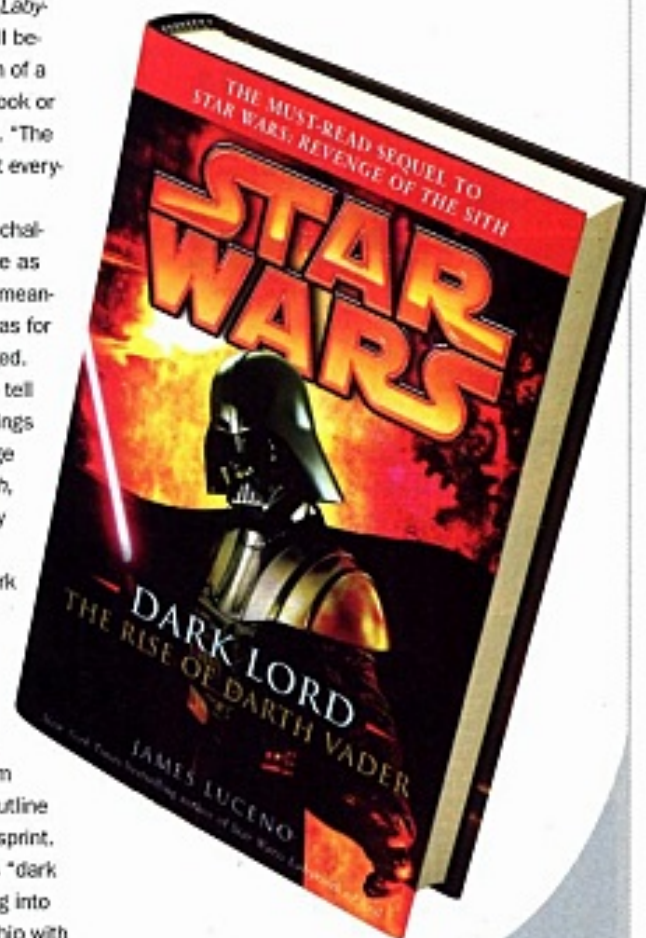
Instead, he wound up exploring the dark times with Lucasfilm Licensing President Howard Roffman, who'd sat down with Lucas to hammer out many facts about that period of galactic history. Luceno says he kept asking Roffman questions about the dark times, expanding his "germ of a story" into an increasingly detailed outline and then writing *Dark Lord* in a five-week sprint.

Luceno calls the daily writing sessions "dark fun," saying he particularly enjoyed getting into Anakin's head and exploring his relationship with

Sidious. Now, with *Dark Lord* behind him, Luceno finds himself in a strange position: For the first time in years, he doesn't have another *Star Wars* project ahead of him. "I'm taking time off and waiting to see what I want to turn my hand to next," Luceno says.

But what about his work building out the *Star Wars* universe? Luceno confesses there's one story that particularly intrigues him—one woven through the prequel trilogy and hinted at since the earliest days of the saga, with its mentions of the Journal of the Whills.

"I would love to write the story of how and where Qui-Gon learned the secret of defeating death through the Force," Luceno says. "The way I see it, Darth Plagueis and Qui-Gon were both out there looking for the secret at the same time. And they both found their way to it. But Qui-Gon found the proper way to it." —Jason Fry





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A Galaxy Full Of Rogues

WEDGE AND COMPANY HAVE THEIR HISTORY REVEALED

Mention the name Wedge Antilles to a casual Star Wars fan, and you're likely to get a blank stare. But to a certain contingent of X-wing loving diehards, the "Great One" is an object of Wedge worship that has grown far beyond its original tongue-in-cheek roots. Wedge Antilles, the Rebel pilot supporting character who appeared in all three films in the original trilogy, has starred in a string of bestselling novels as well as in Dark Horse Comics' X-Wing series, which wrapped up after 35 issues in 1998. So where's he been, and what's he doing back on comics racks this summer?

"X-Wing has consistently been one of our most-requested Star Wars titles," says Dark Horse's Randy Stradley, despite the fact that low sales (in comparison to Dark Horse's other Star Wars titles) led to its cancellation. Not wanting to raise false hopes, Stradley says he finally put his foot down on the Dark Horse Comics message boards and declared that "we will absolutely, positively never resurrect the X-Wing series." Three weeks later, he found himself making plans for the three-issue limited series *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron: Rogue Leader*.

What changed? Stradley had identified a hole in the timeline—a missing piece of Rogue Squadron's history. Set between the events of *Return of the Jedi* and issue #1 of the original series, *Rogue Leader* is an "origin story" that sets the stage for the post-movie incarnation of the squadron, and vividly demonstrates why the Rogues are needed in a galaxy filled with Imperials and terrorists.

"To me, Rogue Squadron has always been composed of the Alliance's go-to pilots," says writer Haden Blackman (*Jango Fett: Open Seasons*, *Star Wars Republic*). "They're the guys you call in for the seemingly impossible missions, from taking down AT-ATs in tiny snowspeeders to blowing up the Death Star. But they're also



a microcosm of the Rebel Alliance as a whole, composed of different people from different backgrounds all working together." The events of *Rogue Leader* will shake up the squadron and give the Rogues a new mission for a changed galaxy. The result will be the creation of what Blackman calls a "very proactive special-ops team."

Wedge Antilles has always been the heart and soul of the Rogues. *Rogue Leader* hinges on Wedge's homecoming to the Corellian system, where as a boy he lived aboard an orbital refueling station until pirates destroyed it, killing his parents. "Bringing Wedge home is more than just a way to humanize him," says Blackman. "It's a way for him to focus on what really matters." When Wedge's visit goes sour, readers get to follow the Rogues on a mission to the Corellian planet of Tralus as well as witness the death of a movie character (said character has the smallest of bit parts in *Return of the Jedi*, but in a movie saga as beloved as this one, a visit from the Reaper is always significant).

Rogue Leader also prominently features Luke Skywalker, fresh from the death of his father and the revelations about his sister, Leia. Luke, not often associated with the post-movie Rogues, is in fact one of their founding members (and probably has a lifetime legacy membership.)

Argentinean Tomas Giorello (*Star Wars Empire*) is handling the art duties on *Rogue Leader*. While he's an enormous Star Wars fan—he confesses that, when he received the script to the series, he was too excited to sleep—he admits that he couldn't always follow the part that the X-wing pilots played throughout the original trilogy. "The movies have [Spanish] subtitles of course, but a lot of the action was happening so fast I couldn't read and follow everything that was happening on screen," he says. "But now that I've had a few years of English practice, I can better understand the role of the pilots and the great job they do. So I guess you can call me a new Rogue Squadron fan!"

What is it about Rogue Squadron that keeps them together? So far, they've vanquished both the Empire and the ambiguity of the comics publishing schedule. "I think the Rogues stick together out of loyalty to each other and to the idea

of the squadron," says Blackman. "And their job isn't done. As long as there are Imperials, there will be a need for Rogue Squadron."

—Daniel Wallace

PITCHING WEDGE

So you're new to the adventures of Wedge Antilles and *Rogue Squadron*? Allow us to make a few suggestions to better prepare you for *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron: Rogue Leader*.

Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron issues #1-4 (Dark Horse Comics, 1995). The first four issues of the series, encompassing the storyline entitled "The Rebel Opposition," takes the Rogues on an ill-fated mission to the jungle planet Ciriap. *Rogue Leader* is set immediately before these issues. "The Rebel Opposition" is the only X-Wing storyline not collected in trade paperback form, and its sometimes-meandering plot is evidence of a comic that was still figuring out where it wanted to go. The series didn't really hit its stride until...

Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron: The Phantom Affair trade paperback (Dark Horse Comics, 1997). Stunning art by Edwin Biukovic makes this collection of issues #5-8 a must-have and a perennial fan favorite. The Rogues investigate an Imperial superweapon and a Jedi ghost on Miras, but it's the flashbacks to Wedge's childhood aboard Corellia's Gus Treta space station that will most interest new fans.

Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron: Blood and Honor trade paperback (Dark Horse Comics, 1999). This collection of issues #25-27 includes "The Making of Baron Fel," the story of the Empire's greatest TIE fighter ace. Although *Blood and Honor* doesn't have a direct tie-in to the events of *Rogue Leader*, it spotlights a character who has become a vital part of squadron folklore.

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BLAST!
THIS IS LIKE
FLYING A HUTT
SAIL BARGE...



YOU
VOLUNTEERED
TO RETURN TO ENDOR
FOR SALVAGE DUTY,
COMMANDER
ANTILLES.

DON'T
REMINDE
ME...



Mustafar: Main Control Room

FIGHTING A FRIEND TURNED FOE

The ultimate duel between Master and apprentice took place on many soundstages at Fox Studios Australia and wrapped up on the largest of them all—Stage 7—on September 9, 2003. The main control room, which served as part of the backdrop for the confrontation, occupied half of the soundstage as the biggest finished Mustafar set. Other parts of the facility—such as the conference room, hallway, and landing platform—were all on separate sound stages, and with a little editing and the use of computer-generated additions, they would appear as one continuous location. The day before the big fight, Hayden Christensen went through the same set wiping out Separatist leaders, soldiers, and droids as the newest Dark Lord of the Sith. But that was nothing compared to his battle with Ewan McGregor.

The production schedule had the crew filming this particular segment last despite the fact that the indoor fighting occurs early in the duel. For the previous two prequels, the stunt saber blades were made out of simple aluminum tubing, and stopping filming to replace or repair a bent blade became a frequent occurrence. For *Revenge of the Sith*, the saber props were upgraded to specially made carbon-fiber blades, which enabled them to take a great deal of abuse. The blades were so tough that Ewan McGregor, who was infamous for going through many aluminum blades, favored a single stunt saber prop throughout the film because he liked its balance. The two actors-turned-swordsmen clashed blades with precise movements choreographed by Stunt Coordinator Nick Gillard. At one point during the duel, the two foes stand in the center of the room twirling their blades furiously while attempting to push the Force towards each other. "That toe-to-toe thing shows that they can't get through each other's defenses," explains Gillard, "because they know each other's moves so intimately. I think it's something like 40 moves; I did the first eight, and then I let them go with it." After reviewing the video of one exceptional take on the control room set, Ewan turned to Hayden and said, "That was really maybe the fastest we've ever done it." The two actors then shook hands, showing the camaraderie that their onscreen counterparts had lost.

With the close quarters combat clearly a stalemate, the two Jedi continue swinging their blades around the room. Collateral damage is inflicted on various panels and controls, which are simulated to explode at just the right moment during filming by hidden squibs painstakingly put into place by the practical effect team. Before moving the fight outside, one particular explosive hit triggers flashing red and white lights on the set. The actors didn't miss a beat, however, carrying on with the intensity and concentration of their characters. In the film, the lights and large screen graphics warn of the facility's shield failure that is about to tear the structure apart. Because the exterior footage was shot earlier in production, First Assistant Director Colin Fletcher announced at the conclusion of the day, "That completes the Anakin/Obi-Wan fight!"

—Chris Trevas





There was only bluescreen beyond this door during filming. ILM matted in the hallway during postproduction. The hall was actually a separate set not connected to the control room.

Stunt doubles Nash Edgerton (Obi-Wan) and Ben Cooke (Anakin) would step in for the slams and crashes against the protruding control panels. They both took running twisting leaps onto the hard set.

The large wall screens were solid glowing panels of amber and cyan on set. At the time, the exact graphics were yet to be determined.

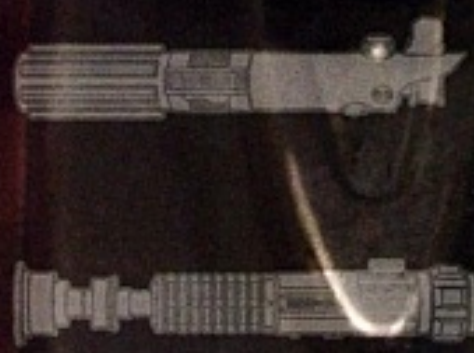
Real-time battlefield tactical displays may be paused on the holographic table to accept incoming calls.

Note Gunray has finally met his end by Darth Vader's blade. His large hat actually served a practical purpose during filming. It hid all the animatronic gears that manipulated the mask's mouth.

Battle droids have always been nothing but lightsaber fodder for Jedi. Even these red security models don't last long.

The design of Anakin's lightsaber was already a familiar one to fans as Luke's first lightsaber in the classic trilogy. The Prop Department modeled the new hilt after an original one used in *The Empire Strikes Back* that they borrowed from its display case at Skywalker Ranch.

Obi-Wan's lightsaber was custom machined to resemble the one used by Alec Guinness in *A New Hope* except in much newer condition. It was also made slightly thinner for a more comfortable grip. Bladed stunt versions were made simpler for fighting by leaving off protruding details like the control box.



GROUND ASSAULT

To the victor go the spoils—all it takes is a little mechanical muscle. *By Daniel Wallace*

When you think *Star Wars*, you think spaceships—even though, upon closer examination, the film saga's most iconic creations tend to be its ground and air vehicles. Luke Skywalker's battered landspeeder is the embodiment of small-town dreams. AT-AT walkers symbolize the crushing might of the Empire. And Imperial speeder bikes are a zippy expression of George Lucas' need for speed.

The trend becomes even more pronounced in the prequel trilogy. What would *The Phantom Menace* be without its Podrace? And the signature machines of *Attack of the Clones* are undoubtedly its Republic gunships, when their appearance at the Geonosian arena signals the triumphant arrival of the cavalry.

Star Wars Episode III: *Revenge of the Sith* features a show-stopping space battle, but its action continues on strange planets all across the galaxy. From the bayous of Kashyyyk to the fungus fields of Felucia, here are the vehicles of Episode III.

REPUBLIC JUGGERNAUT

"Tank you very much!" the clone crews of the HAWA6 Juggernaut may shout as they roll into battle against Separatist droid forces. And if awful puns aren't classified as weapons of mass destruction (and they should be), the Juggernaut can open up with its rocket and grenade launchers, or a half dozen deadly laser cannons.

The Juggernaut is an anomaly within the Grand Army of the Republic. In fact, it's an odd fit among the vehicles in all six *Star Wars* movies—it rolls. Ground transportation within the galaxy far, far away is almost exclusively of the hovering kind (the landspeeder) or the walking kind (the AT-AT). Until now, only primitive Gungan pull-carts and hoop-wheeled Separatist hailfire droids have populated the Juggernaut's lonely locomotion category.

Star Wars vehicle engineers clearly hold a bias against wheels, but in the design of the Juggernaut, they overcompensated with a vengeance. Ten titanic tires support a tank that's the size of a small building. The wide treads help spread the tank's weight over a broad surface area. The giant wheels give the Juggernaut



one satisfying advantage over its hovering counterparts—when battle droids threaten, it can simply crush them beneath its wheels.

The front end of the Juggernaut features a retractable jaw panel that conceals two antipersonnel blaster cannons. This end of the tank is heavily armored and flush with the rest of the body—a sharp contrast to the smaller rear cockpit that, with its rounded shape and narrower “neck” access corridor, looks like the head of a turtle. This front/back conflict makes the Juggernaut look like it’s usually rolling in reverse. The vehicle is actually designed to operate in either direction, with the front or rear cockpit taking command depending on the vehicle’s orientation. The clone drivers operating each end even have a friendly rivalry over which is the “true” command cockpit.

Juggernauts have laser cannons on the top and sides and missile launchers installed inside fold-out panels. This firepower is undoubtedly appreciated by the unlucky clone trooper who draws spotter duty, for he has the worst job in the Grand Army. From a pod high above the vehicle’s back—like a pirate in the crow’s nest of a sailing ship—the spotter keeps a lookout for the advance of Separatist forces. His elevated position gives him a clear view of the terrain, but makes him an easy target for enemy fire.

In *Revenge of the Sith*, Juggernauts are under the command of Jedi Master Yoda as he works to liberate the Wookiee homeworld Kashyyyk from the droid forces of the Separatists. Yet to fans of the Expanded Universe, the Juggernaut may already seem like an old friend. In fact, some might legitimately ask if this is a case of a movie concept plucked directly from the EU, as previously seen with the Twi’lek Jedi Knight Aayla Secura. The answer is no—the Juggernaut first surfaced way back in the late 1970s, during conceptual work for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

The wheeled tanks were conceived as Imperial ground assault vehicles for *Empire*, but ultimately scrapped in favor of the AT-ATs. Sketches of the tanks, however, were uncovered by the designers of the original *Star Wars* role-playing game, who fleshed out this weapon of war in 1994’s *Imperial Sourcebook*, among other sources. From there, it was an easy leap into Expanded Universe roles throughout the 1990s. Memorable appearances by Juggernauts in spin-off fiction include 1996’s *Darksaber*, in which Luke Skywalker’s Jedi trainees use the Force to fold one of the tanks in on itself during an Imperial invasion of the Jedi Academy.

DROID GUNSHIP

The Separatists got their tails kicked by Republic gunships during the climax of *Attack of the Clones*. It seems only fitting that they return the favor in *Episode III*. The Separatist droid gunship borrows the same flight characteristics and attack profile as its Republic counterpart, filling a hole in the Separatist military lineup.



The droid gunship is a hovering arsenal. Without the need for huge jet engines or a pilot’s cockpit, its disc-shaped body is basically one big support frame for missiles. A single gunship can carry up to fourteen missiles, and each missile is capable of independent maneuvering in order to home in on targets.

The nose of the droid gunship is also weapon-heavy, sprouting laser cannons like wasp stingers. A single cannon protrudes at center, while two ball-shaped turret cannons complete the illusion of a hovering insect with bulging, compound eyes. Wingtip lasers round out the craft’s offensive armaments, and can be removed and swapped out for different payloads depending on the mission profile.

In Separatist military-speak the droid gunship is branded an HMP, or Heavy Missile Platform. According to its official back story, the vessel is a product of Baktoid Fleet Ordnance, a division of the same company that makes the Separatists’ ubiquitous battle droids. A droid gunship is at its deadliest when it’s suspended above a battlefield, using all its weapons at once to rain down destruction on infantry battalions.

While the final design of the droid gunship seems inspired by the profile of an angry insect, its circular body also bears a similarity to the familiar “flying saucer” that hit its pop-cultural peak in sci-fi movies of the 1950s. (George Lucas has acknowledged that the Trade Federation battleships from *The Phantom Menace* took their initial shape as a result of his love for the UFO template, although the battleships became more donut-shaped in the movie.)



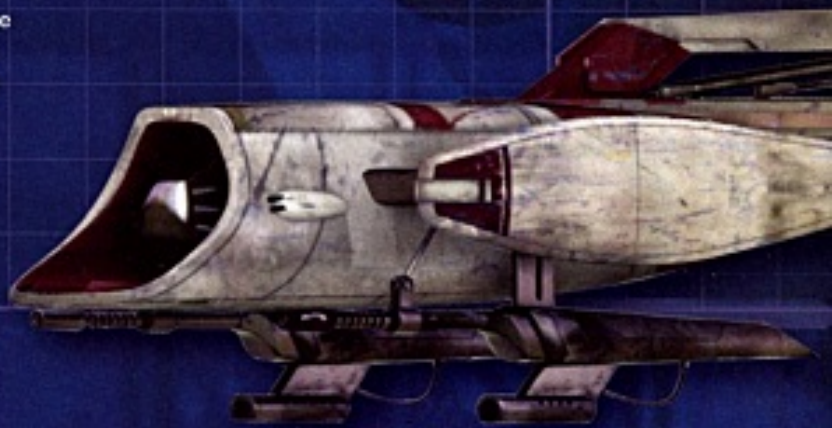
WOOKIEE CATAMARAN

The Oevvaor catamaran is unlike anything else in Episode III, instantly announcing itself as the slow-cooked product of dedicated Wookiee artisans. While everything else associated with the Clone Wars is mostly rivets and hull plating, the catamaran boasts a sleekly polished wood finish, like a sailboat at a millionaire's marina.

Kashyyyk, the Wookiee homeworld, did not have a robust defense force at the time of its invasion by Separatist forces in *Revenge of the Sith*. Oevvaor catamarans, normally employed for fishing or pleasure cruising, were among the assets commandeered by the leaders of Kachirho to aid in their home city's defense. Since Oevvaor catamarans do not come with installed weaponry, their Wookiee pilots are forced to rely on blaster side-arms and tossed thermal detonators.

An Oevvaor catamaran has two hulls, with room for two Wookiees in each. Separating the two hulls is a thin wooden framework resembling the legs of a wicker chair, supporting a fuel tank and two Podracer-like engines on separate outriggers. Many models are also able to fly with a combination of propellers and repulsorlifts. At top speed, a standard catamaran can skip across the water at 230 miles per hour (370 kph).

"Oevvaor" is the name of an aquatic reptile that haunts the waters near Kachirho, preying on weaker animals and fiercely defending its territory. The Wookiees see something of a kindred spirit in the Oevvaor. They construct its namesake catamarans from the finest-quality wroshyr wood, hewn from the kilometers-high trees that blanket the Kashyyyk mainland.





BARC SPEEDER

The speeder bike chase through Endor's forest is arguably *Return of the Jedi*'s action high-water mark, an exhilarating set piece of headlong speed that would probably trigger a mass outbreak of motion sickness if *Jedi* were projected in IMAX. Speeder bikes were planned to reappear in *Attack of the Clones* (a clone trooper action figure, packaged with a speeder bike, was produced as a movie tie-in by Hasbro) but didn't make it into the final film. *Revenge of the Sith* restores the familiar speeder bike, and makes it distinct from—yet a clear ancestor of—the bikes favored by *Jedi*'s biker scouts.

The BARC speeder is a swift reconnaissance vehicle that derives its acronym from "Biker Advanced Recon Commando," for the specialized clone drivers that operate them. Most are painted in the traditional red and white colors of the Republic Army, though some bear brown or green camouflage markings to better blend into forest environments.

Measuring four-and-a-half-meters long, each speeder is equipped with a blaster cannon and a turbocharged repulsorlift engine. The BARC speeder is based on the Mobquet Ripper, a civilian model often used in back-alley drag races.

Stass Allie, one of the Jedi generals in charge of Republic operations on the planet Saleucami, found herself steering a BARC speeder at the moment Darth Sidious unleashed Order 66. The clone troopers following her suddenly turned traitor, and her speeder's tight cornering wasn't enough to shake off pursuers piloting identical machines.



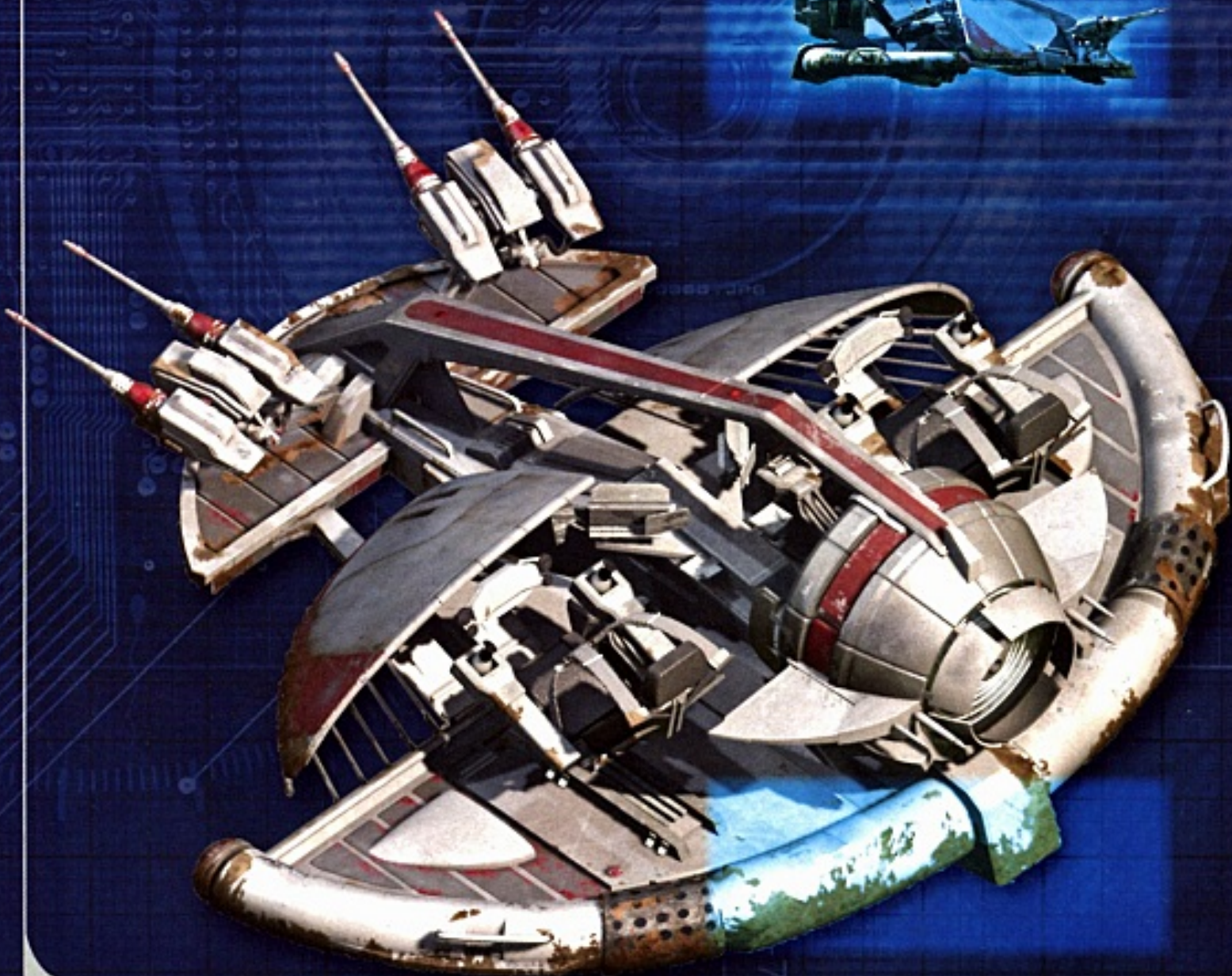
SWAMP SPEEDER

If clone troopers ever wanted to go alligator hunting in the Florida everglades (or dragonsnake hunting in the bogs of Dagobah) they'd have no better ride than the ISP "swamp speeder."

The Republic ISP, or Infantry Support Platform, is a futuristic re-interpretation of the airboats often used to cross marshes throughout the American south-east. A huge rear fan propels both types of vehicles above the surface of the swamp—but while the airboat skims the water's surface, the Republic ISP floats on a thin buffer of anti-gravity.

This repulsorlift cushion means that the ISP can travel across almost any terrain, despite its swampy nickname. It is designed to carry two clone troopers, a driver and a gunner, and comes mounted with two twin-blasters cannons on its leading fin. Its turbofan allows it to reach speeds of up to 62 miles per hour (100 kph), relatively modest by *Star Wars* standards.

In *Revenge of the Sith*, Republic ISPs are deployed to help defend the Wookiee coastal city of Kachirho. They fight alongside graceful Wookiee catamarans, providing a metal-and-wood visual contrast of the differences between Republic mass production and Kashyyyk handcraftsmanship.





CORUSCANT FIRESHIP

Fireships make a brief but heroic appearance in Episode III, escorting the wreck of the Separatist flagship *Invisible Hand* as Anakin Skywalker guides it in for a crash landing. As the lead fireship pilot's steady voice broadcasts over the comm system, his vehicle and several others drench the *Invisible Hand* with fire-retardant chemicals pumped through high-pressure spray nozzles.

It had already been a busy week for the fireships. The Battle of Coruscant had ravaged the capital's cityscape, igniting buildings with Separatist laser fire and flattening others as wounded starships fell from orbit and detonated like bombs on impact. Fireships, and the rescue crews they carried, had been on 24-hour emergency alert for days. The *Invisible Hand* incident was one of their last missions, and by cooling its superheated hull, they bought the time needed for Anakin to steer it safely onto a rooftop runway.

Fireships are bigger than they look, with enough room inside to accommodate a brigade of firefighters and a medical bay for stabilizing injured patients until they can be transported to a medcenter. Repulsorlifts keep the craft aloft, while a belly-mounted tractor beam can move debris, or can pluck wounded victims out of a danger zone.

Its internal tanks are filled with water, foam, or specialized chemical combinations designed to snuff out any type of fire. Four sprayers, one on the tip of each stubby wing, can be directed and controlled from the cockpit. Flashing lights and sirens announce the approach of fireships. As emergency vehicles, they are among the only airtspeeders permitted to ignore the right-angle grid patterns of Coruscant's traffic system.



For all their derring-do in dousing the wreck of the *Invisible Hand*, fireships don't show up in Episode III when they're needed the most: during the torching of the Jedi Temple. As smoke pours from the Temple windows to blacken the Coruscant sky, not a single fireship is seen attempting to halt the blaze. It's easy to imagine the order from Chancellor Palpatine that would have kept the rescue teams grounded: "Let the Jedi burn."



AT-RT

The AT-RT walker is one of *Star Wars*' most signature creations. You'd have to go back more than a century to H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* and its Martian tripods to find another sci-fi vehicle with such legendary legs.

Expanding on the walker legacy are the two-legged AT-STs, introduced in *The Empire Strikes Back* and the six-legged, beetle-like AT-TE seen in *Attack of the Clones*. *Revenge of the Sith* brings a brand-new walker into the mix with the AT-RT.

The AT-RT, or All Terrain Recon Transport, is a pint-sized version of the scout walker. It has only enough room for a single driver, who sits in a minimalist open cockpit. The overall impression is of a mounted policeman on horseback, and the AT-RT is indeed designed for policing actions, where the operator can keep an eye on crowds from an elevated position.

The AT-RT has the handlebars of a speeder bike, and several slender communication antennas sprouting from its rear carriage. Its chin-slung laser cannon can tear apart battle droids, but it is far too weak to punch through the armor of Separatist spider droids. The AT-RT's lack of armor makes it of limited use in battle. Military forces such as the Grand Army of the Republic usually deploy AT-RTs on battlefields only after the shooting has stopped. In *Revenge of the Sith*, AT-RTs bound across the Kashyyyk terrain in a fruitless hunt for Jedi Master Yoda.



GRIEVOUS' WHEEL BIKE

Someone must have sent General Grievous the memo about the Juggernaut. Star Wars wheeled vehicles are apparently no longer verboten, but the good general put his own bizarre spin on this ancient method of transportation. To navigate the vertical sinkholes of Utapau, Grievous employs a wheel bike, an outlandish gyro buggy that looks like the Monster Garage fusing of a monster truck and a unicycle.


Teeth stud the outside tread of the double wheels, providing the ultimate in traction control. These hook-like grippers can bite into mountainsides like ice axes, allowing the wheel bike to drive straight up Utapau crevasses. Grievous likes to roar into battle on his wheel bike while wielding a lightsaber, like some grim horseman of the apocalypse shaking his scythe.

Despite its gigantic tires, the wheel bike isn't that far removed from Star Wars' advanced walker technology. Four clawed limbs, normally swept back out of the way, can unfold to anchor the vehicle in parking mode or allow it to leap across difficult terrain.

The bike's design places the driver at dead center. It's not an entirely new concept for Star Wars. A wheel bike vehicle was used in the *Droids* cartoon, and the racer Teemto Pagalies used a similar cockpit for his Podracer in *The Phantom Menace*. Unlike Pagalies' machine, however, the wheel bike is a self-contained unit, with its motor packed into its hub.

Believe it or not, these bikes are made for civilian use in the Star Wars galaxy. They are the product of the Z-Gomot Ternbouell Guppat Corporation, a justifiably obscure operation in the Zug system. Grievous has modified his personal model, ripping out the passenger seat and replacing it with a jutting twin laser cannon. The general also disdains Guppat-installed luxuries such as padded seats, preferring instead a magnetized chair that glues his metal body firmly in place. ☞





The Art Of REVENGE OF THE SITH

Part One

Rare and seldom seen imagery from
George Lucas' final film installment.

By J.W. Rinzler

PLANET CONCEPT, VERSION 01

Erik Tiemens—June 20, 2002

"This was my first pass at the sink-hole planet [Utapau], though we didn't even know at the time that's what we'd call it. I was looking at some Ralph McQuarrie drawings and studying the architecture."

While attending art department meetings during late preproduction on *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*, I was simultaneously interviewing all of the concept artists during the months of April, May, and June 2003. The goal was to have them talk about each artwork while the processes, inspiration, and stories were still fresh in their minds. Luckily, Ryan Church, Erik Tiemens, Iain McCaig, Sang Jun Lee, Derek Thompson, T. J. Frame, Warren Fu, Feng Zhu, John Goodson, Donny Wagner, and Alex Jaeger were very patient and didn't mind the sometimes four-hour-long interview process. The result was a lot of transcribing—and a lot of great material.

I was able to place most of it in the book *The Art of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith* (2005, Del Rey). However, quite a few

excerpts didn't make it. We were limited by a page count of 224, and we had an over-abundance of art—nearly 4,000 pieces—so it was physically impossible to cram them all in. Fortunately, *Star Wars Insider* has found room for some of these stragglers within its pages. They're presented here with the date of their creation, when available, and their corresponding quote. As in the book, many of these artworks didn't make it to the final film, but all were instrumental in George Lucas' conceptual process.

Many of these early pieces were done before the artists had read the script—because Lucas hadn't written one yet—and the artists' comments reflect that early process during which Lucas would give them ideas as assignments, and the next week look at the results. As he wrote the script, the ideas expanded and were refined....



ICE-PLANET CONCEPT THUMBNAILS

Erik Tiemens—June 11, 2002

"On Geonosis [in Episode II], I'd always wanted to have mud holes or springs. That's why we had some of the steam vents there. But George wanted to keep it drier. I tried it again for the ice planet, as we were starting up on concepts for Episode III. The color of the water ended up being the one used at the bottom of the sink holes [on Utapau]."



FLOATING BUILDINGS ENVIRONMENT

Ryan Church—June 5, 2002

"I'd always wanted to see floating buildings on Coruscant—you know, they've mastered anti-gravity."



PADMÉ COSTUME CONCEPT 12

Sang Jun Lee—August 30, 2002

"George wanted Padmé's costumes to be more simplified than in Episode II. At that time, we didn't know she was going to be pregnant."

NABOO CRUISER: WARTIME MODE

Ryan Church—July 1, 2002

"This led to Padmé's skiff, after its edges got a little rounded off."



LEMUR CONCEPT 19

Sang Jun Lee—August 23, 2002

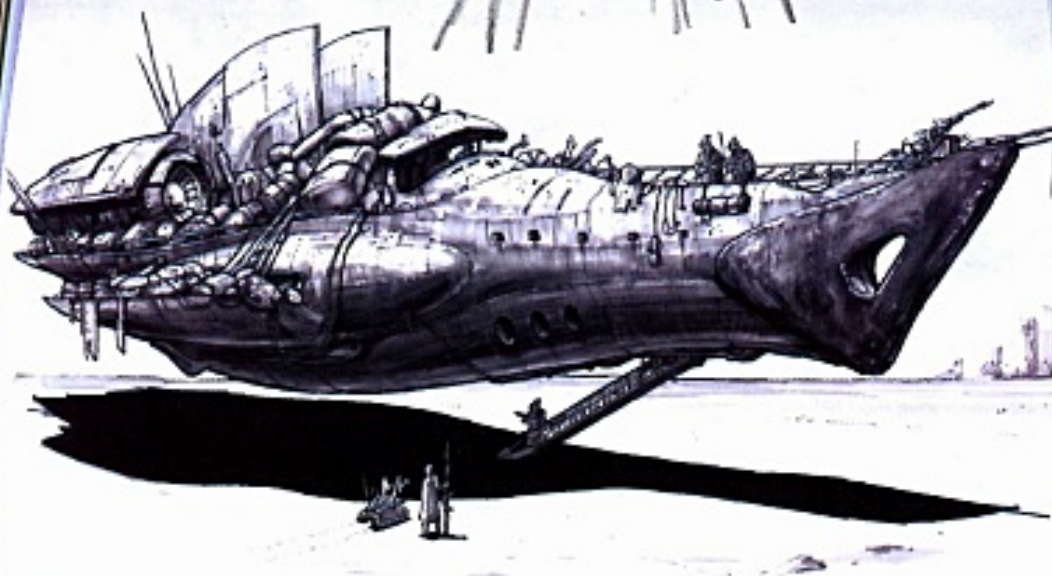
"George looked through all the lemurs, and said there should be more species, just like there is on Earth. So I did space lemurs, warrior lemurs, and so on."

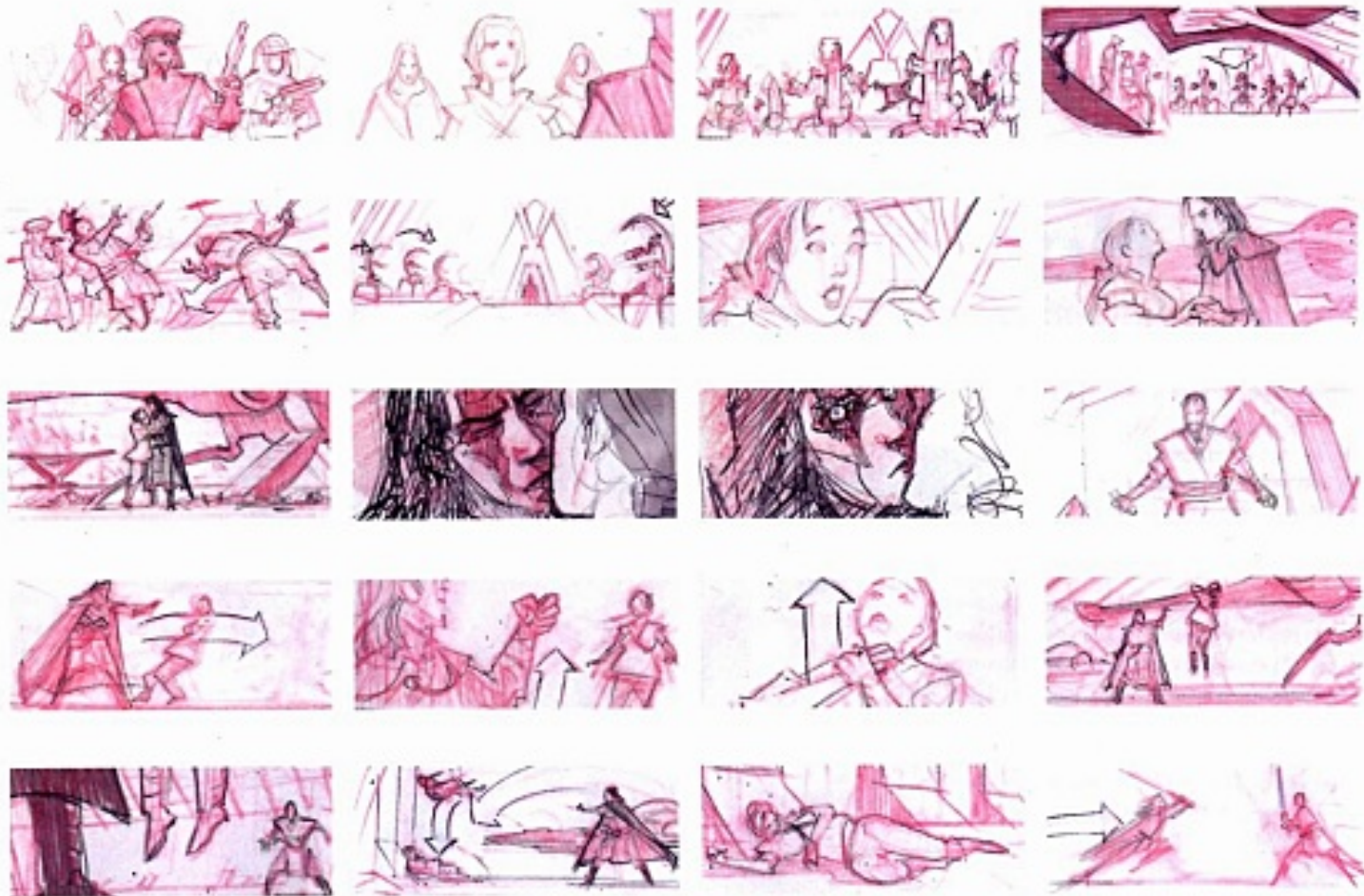


CRYSTAL PLANET JUNK BARGE

T. J. Frame—August 30, 2002

"This was for the crystal planet (now we know it's Mygeeto), and Erik said to imagine large sheets of crystal as if they were sand dunes. I'm going to add some guns to it."





MUSTAFAR ARRIVAL (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)

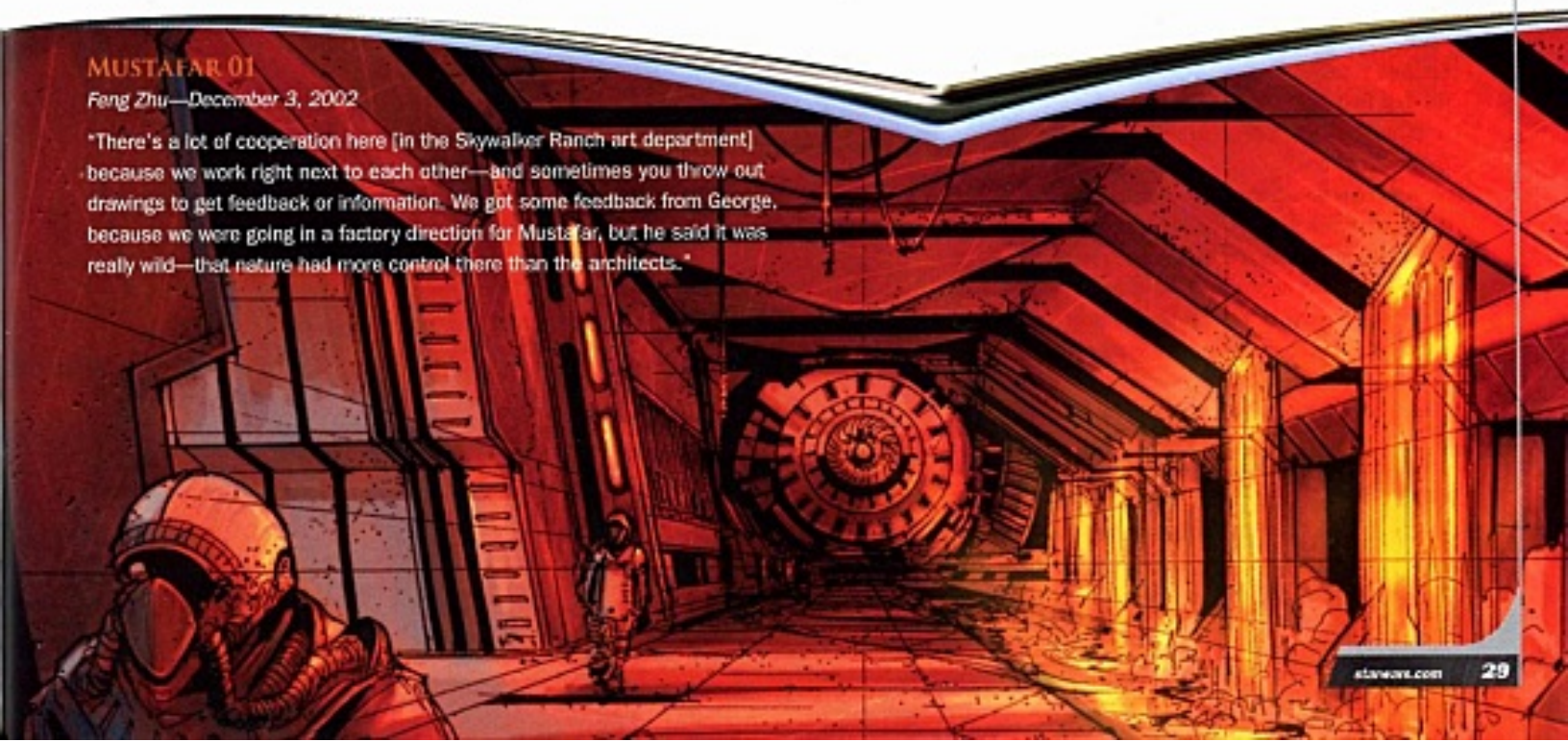
Derek Thompson—March 2003

"A lot of the ideas came out of the storyboarding process. Ian [McCaig], Jun, and I had a great first meeting with Ben [Burtt, who was working on the video-matics], and we just started hammering it out. The early boards were done very crudely to cover a huge amount of action; so we were all drawing in rudimentary form "beats"—the key moments that would cover the action. We would subdivide the sequences into eight or ten scenes and then assign them to be fleshed out, play up the drama, add more frames. For the first four to six weeks, we were working at the center table and we turned it into a tornado of post-its, cutting and pasting, and Sharpies. This is the first scene where I started to feel an emotional connection [storyboarding Padmé's death]; it's such a major scene in the whole of the *Star Wars* universe."

MUSTAFAR 01

Feng Zhu—December 3, 2002

"There's a lot of cooperation here [in the Skywalker Ranch art department] because we work right next to each other—and sometimes you throw out drawings to get feedback or information. We got some feedback from George, because we were going in a factory direction for Mustafar, but he said it was really wild—that nature had more control there than the architects."





A

ASK THE MASTER

Q & A

By Pablo Hidalgo

Dead Sith Tell No Tales

PLUS, JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS AND A MYSTERIOUS SHAMAN

*What exactly is Yoda talking about at the end of *Revenge of the Sith* on board the *Tantive IV* when he tells Obi-Wan about "training on Tatooine" and Qui-Gon's spirit? The whole thing surprised and confused me.*

I don't think you're alone, because Force spirits are one of those things that George Lucas prefers to keep more mysterious than over-explained. But you're in luck, since the published screenplay and some of the adaptations of the Episode III story go into some more detail.

Sometime during his travels, Qui-Gon Jinn came across a unique Force ability said to be practiced by a mysterious Force adept known as a Shaman of the Whills. This school of knowledge, developed far outside the Jedi study of the Force, had the power to preserve consciousness and identity beyond death—it was a pathway to immortality, exactly what the Sith had long sought. Yet the Sith methods would never uncover it, for it was a state that could only be achieved through compassion and selflessness. Qui-Gon's knowledge of this ability was incomplete and largely theoretical, but upon his death, he attempted it and partially succeeded. His body did not subsume into nothingness, as many fans were surprised to see in Episode I. But his voice did return from beyond the grave in Episode II, though it was distant and hard for Yoda to detect.

By reaching out to the wise old Jedi Master, Qui-Gon and Yoda were able to develop a technique to commune with one another, bridging the gap between the living and non-living. Qui-Gon would impart his knowledge about this ability to Obi-Wan and Yoda during their solitude, so at their death they could shed their corporeal forms completely. "You will learn to let go of everything. No attachment, no thought of self. No physical self," described the spectral voice of Qui-Gon to Yoda in dialogue cut from Episode III.

In *Return of the Jedi*, Anakin achieves this state through his sacrifice. His selfless act in saving his son at the cost of his own life took him off the Sith path to oblivion. How exactly he



YODA'S SECRET



mastered this esoteric technique isn't as important as the fact that he did retain his identity, suggesting that he succeeded in the end. Though for those who wonder, it is thought that Yoda and Obi-Wan together worked to bring Anakin to their side of the netherworld.

(Oh, and just to throw a potential wrench into these works, for long-term continuity fans, I realize this take on immortality does create a lot of apparent contradictions when held against stories of Freedon Nadd, Exar Kun, the cloned Palpatine, and other Sith spirits who seem to live beyond death. We'll have to save that discussion for another day).

While at the Coruscant Opera House, Chancellor Palpatine tells Anakin about the tragedy of Darth Plagueis the Wise. Palpatine goes on to tell Anakin how Plagueis' apprentice kills him in his sleep, and he appears to tell the story with a certain measure of satisfaction. Although Palpatine describes the story as a legend, I got the distinct impression that he might actually have been Plagueis' apprentice. Is that so? If not, who was Palpatine's Sith Master? Though the sly Chancellor may have sugarcoated his tale as a Sith legend, Darth Plagueis was a real Sith Lord who existed at a time when everyone but a handful of people in the galaxy believed the Sith to be extinct. Plagueis was indeed Sidious' master, and true to Sith form, Sidious killed him.

Now, just how much truth lies in the rest of the story—Plagueis' ability to influence the midi-chlorians to create and preserve life—remains to be revealed.

When Obi-Wan and Yoda are inside the Jedi Temple, picking through the ruins after Anakin's attack, they're there at the same time Chancellor Palpatine is proclaiming himself Emperor. But Obi-Wan refers to the Chancellor as the Emperor in that scene. How does he know that he's taken that title? There's a good reason that title slips so easily from Obi-Wan's tongue—he's just heard the news. In the holographic recording he's just finished watching, Palpatine refers to his new domain when he tasks Anakin to "bring peace to the Empire." Kenobi can put two and two together.



Regarding the cloned soldiers, am I to believe that they are designed to not have choice or emotions? When the order was given to kill the Jedi, it appeared that not one of them questioned that action after fighting alongside them. I can understand their being programmed to follow orders, but without free will and emotions they are no better than droids.

Clones can think independently, and that allows them to puzzle their way out of situations not governed by rules and programming, a limitation faced by the mindless battle droids. A clone can devise a creative solution to a problem

that a droid could not. Clones can concoct new plans to achieve a stated objective in the absence of direct orders, or when faced with outdated or contradictory orders.

What a clone can't do—at least not without great difficulty—is disobey an order from a superior officer. They're the ultimate soldiers in that they are utterly and completely loyal to an ideal. Unfortunately, that ideal is not the Jedi order; it's the Republic.

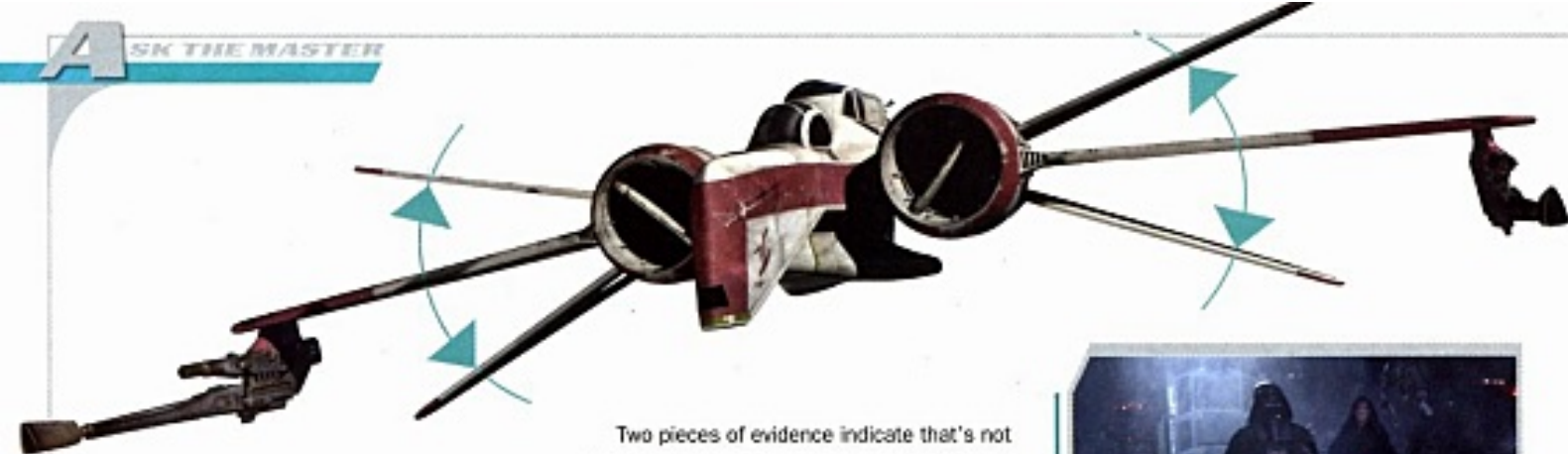
Order 66 is not some pre-programmed genetic trigger. It's not some Manchurian Candidate brain-wash button. It's rather just one of a catalog of orders that clone commanders and their soldiers are trained since birth to follow without question. It identifies their generals, the Jedi Knights, as traitors to the ideal to be dealt with accordingly.

Now, if a clone did disobey Order 66, it would definitely make an interesting and dramatic tale. Something tells me a story like that will be told someday.

I just saw Revenge of the Sith and I have a question. Where did the scar next to Anakin's eye come from at the beginning of Episode III?

You can see Anakin get this scar in the comics set between Episodes II and III. Check out issue #71 of *Star Wars: Republic from Dark Horse Comics*, published in November of 2004. In it, Anakin duels with the dark Jedi Asajj Ventress, and receives a nick from one of her lightsaber blades, resulting in that scar.





I've always been curious; what is the purpose or advantage of locking your S-foils in attack position?

There are several benefits. When an X-wing deploys its wings in attack position, it widens the weapons coverage of the laser cannons by transforming two wingtip fire-points into four. The same can be said of the B-wing, which extends its two wings from its primary central airfoil.

You may wonder why pilots don't just keep the weapons deployed in open configuration. These fighters closed their S-foils for better atmospheric flight performance as well as more efficient hyper-space transit.

Also, open S-foils help further distribute deflector shields and expose radiator cooling vents and heat sinks, important considerations in the heat of combat. The ARC-170 primarily relies on S-foils to do that, since it does not mount weapons on those expanding wings.



How exactly does the Emperor's twisted appearance come about? Is it from physical damage caused by his Force lightning or is it Palpatine's true appearance that he has kept hidden?

While there's always a great deal to be kept vague about Palpatine, there's enough evidence to piece together what happens here with some certainty. But this should be couched by saying the issues surrounding the ravaging of Palpatine's face are symbolic first, and literal second.

Have Palpatine's handsome features been a disguise this entire time? Sure, the serene smiles and wan expressions are an act—we now know he's been a evil Sith this whole time—but was the face itself some sort of illusion?

Two pieces of evidence indicate that's not the case. Whenever we saw Darth Sidious in Episodes I and II prior to his transformation, when he's been speaking to his direct confidants either via hologram or in person, his face has not been disfigured. It's Palpatine's face, albeit hidden beneath a cowl. If Sidious truly drops the politico persona when not undercover, why maintain the presentable face? Even in Episode III, the film where we see his twisted visage, the early scenes where Sidious communicates to Grievous has the Sith Lord appeared unscarred.

The second strike against the notion of an illusory mask is that Sidious never again hides his disfigurement. Why would he stay pruned for the decades to come, even in public? It's not as conclusive an argument as the first statement, since it requires trying to think like an unfathomable Sith Lord, but it's a point worth considering nonetheless.

As described in the novel and in the screenplay, it's the intensity of reflected lightning and the channeling of such raw dark side power that are the catalysts for Palpatine's transformation. Perhaps the face that boils up to the surface is shaped by his dark side corruption, but the lightning is definitely the cause.

Now, it should be noted that George Lucas, Ian McDiarmid, and other crewmembers described the makeup effect—dubbed the Mask of Evil during production—as Palpatine's "true face" and the Chancellor's features as the mask. I'd caution against taking that too literally. I can probably point to interviews in the same vein with Christian Bale describing Bruce Wayne as the mask and Batman as the true face, but no one would take that literally.

I now understand that Anakin's primary reason to join the dark side was to keep his wife alive, but once he learned that she had died wouldn't that deal be forfeited? I would think that his rage at the end of the movie would be directed at his new master and not the droids that performed his life-saving surgery.

A reasoned, rational mind may have weighed the situation and blamed Sidious, but I wouldn't assume the rage that bubbles out of Vader is in any way targeted. Vader's rage is volcanic, unrestrained, and destructive, but he has no reason to take it out on Sidious.



After all, to his tragic way of thinking, why should he? Sidious didn't fail him...it was Vader who killed Padmé. It was Vader who was so arrogant to assume that he could destroy Kenobi. It was Vader who failed and was maimed and crippled and put back together by Sidious.

Sure, Vader didn't get what he wanted out of his deal with the devil, but that doesn't dissolve the pact. That's how the devil works, after all. And, as Yoda said, once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny. Vader was entrenched in the dark side at this point, and he wasn't about to get jolted out of his subservience by outrage against Sidious. He didn't have any at that moment.

Anger, fear, and aggression are weight enough to keep someone mired in the dark side, and Vader has plenty of those feelings to spare. But there's more—although Yoda doesn't include it in his list of Sithly sins, self-loathing, too, can keep someone in the dark for years.

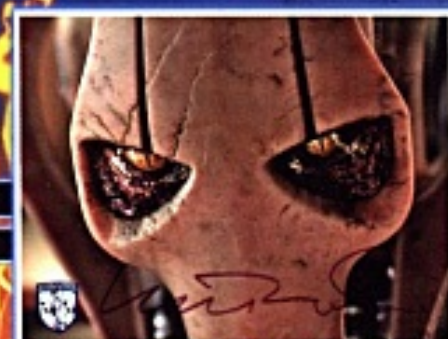


My friends and I have been having a heated discussion over how an AT-AT turns or if it even does. I was wondering if the legs turn or the body pivots.

An AT-AT can turn, but very slowly. The legs do have some ability to step laterally beyond just forward or back, and spread out a bit. It's ungainly and slow, but by moving its legs outwards in such

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a way and taking several steps, a walker can turn direction.

In fact, a walker was supposed to turn in *The Empire Strikes Back*. ILM effects artist and model maker Jon Berg animated a sequence of a walker stopping its forward motion and taking a plodding turn in another direction. It was a very striking piece of animation, but it was used in a very different way in the finished film. George Lucas liked the movement, but it took too much screen time to execute a turn. So he instead used the first half of the turn, of the walker settling into its turning position. You can see it in the movie when a walker seems to "brace" itself just before it blows a snowspeeder out of the sky.

When Anakin lands General Grievous' ship, there's a camera angle of the ship sliding right up to the screen. We can see everyone through the window. But didn't Grievous break that window to escape the ship?

The bridge of the *Invisible Hand* flagship is lined with big, panoramic windows. Grievous throws the electrostaff through one of them, shattering it and forcing an emergency door to seal in its place. This, however, was not the window directly in front of the controls that Anakin sits behind. That window is actually to the right (starboard) of the seat. You can see it sealed in the very same shot you described.

According to timelines, isn't Han Solo around 30 years old at the time of A New Hope? If so, that would make him roughly 10 years old at the end of the Clone Wars, right? Would he not then have knowledge of Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker since they were such big heroes of the Clone Wars? Wouldn't he have said something to Luke when he found out Luke's name?

Han wasn't his planet-hopping "one side of the galaxy to another" self as a pre-teen. The Expanded Universe provides us two pertinent facts that may explain away his ignorance of Kenobi and Skywalker, and his blasé attitude

towards Jedi. One, he was raised as a outpurse by Garis Shrike, a ruthless taskmaster who took care to keep most shreds of information away from Han. This wasn't the type of mentor to educate his wards with the latest headlines or news that didn't in some way profit him.

And two, during the Clone Wars, Corellia had plucked itself out of crisis by turning a blind

eye in the hopes of avoiding the conflict. As described in HoloNet News, the Corellians, in their traditional isolationist way, sealed themselves off from the Separatists crisis that preceded the war and also tried to stay out of the fighting. The war eventually came to Corellia's doorstep, but by then a lot of the more public stories of galactic battles could have been filtered from the public.

In A New Hope, when that one guy (I forgot his name) says: "She lied...she lied to us!" Darth Vader says: "I told you she would never consciously betray the Rebellion." After that he does a hand motion to the other guy, as though he's saying something. It almost looks like they put the voice in when he wasn't doing the hand motion. Did they do that on purpose or was it an accident?

The guy is Grand Moff Tarkin, and Vader's hand motions are the result of his dialogue being cut in the editing room. Originally, Vader had more to impart to Tarkin, but the scene was cut short and split in two. When you watch the movie, you'll see two scenes that are staged in a very similar way. The first one, which you have described, has an Imperial officer march in and tell Tarkin that there is no Rebel base on Dantooine. The other, which comes a few scenes later, has a call inform Tarkin that the Death Star has captured the *Millennium Falcon*.

In the script and as originally filmed, these both took place in the same scene with some extra dialogue in between. But, as *Star Wars* was edited, it was rearranged. Here is the dialogue to the complete scene prior to editing:

Imperial Officer Cass stands before Governor Tarkin and the evil Dark Lord Darth Vader.

Officer Cass: The scout ships have reached Dantooine. They have found the remains of a Rebel base...but they estimate it has been deserted for some time. They are conducting an extensive search of the surrounding system.

Tarkin: She lied! She lied to us!

Vader: I told you she would never consciously betray the Rebellion...unless she thought she could destroy this station in the process.

Tarkin: Terminate her immediately!

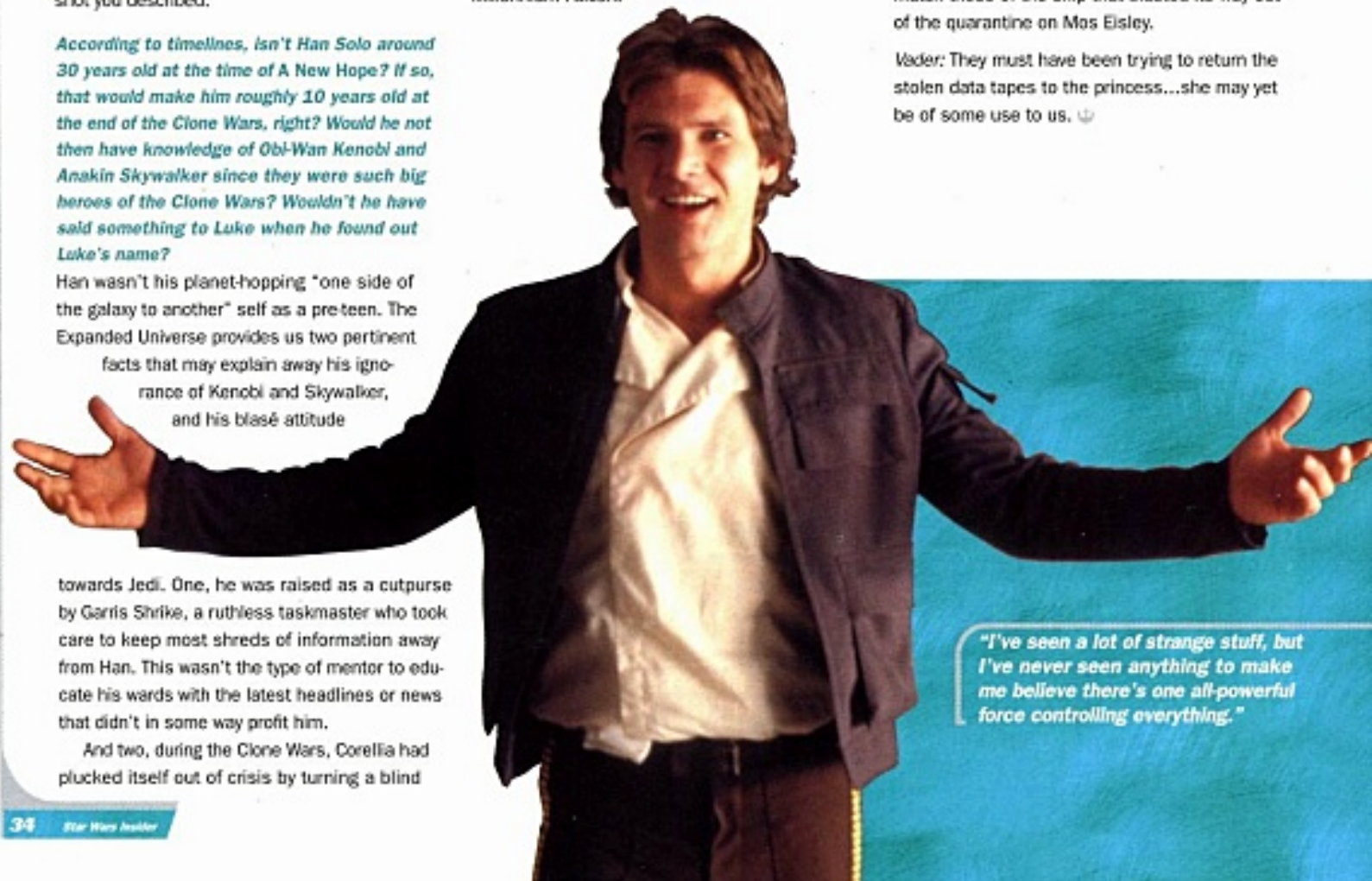
Vader: And lose your only link to the Rebel base? She can still be of value to us.

Tarkin: You'll get nothing more out of her. I'll find that hidden fortress if I have to destroy every star system in this sector.

A quiet beeping tone interrupts the governor.

Voice: We've captured a freighter entering the remains of the Alderaan system. Its markings match those of the ship that blasted its way out of the quarantine on Mos Eisley.

Vader: They must have been trying to return the stolen data tapes to the princess...she may yet be of some use to us. ☺



"I've seen a lot of strange stuff, but I've never seen anything to make me believe there's one all-powerful force controlling everything."



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MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS OF THE EXPANDED UNIVERSE

By Abel G. Peña and Enrique Guerrero

Illustrations by Joe Corroney

Everybody has his or her favorite moments from the *Star Wars* movies: Luke watching the twin suns set, Han being put into carbon-freeze, and of course, Vader's "I am your father" scene. But after almost 30 years of spin-off stories in novels, comics, and other media spanning 25,000 years of fictional history, the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe has produced more than a few memorable moments of its own.

For all practical purposes, the article that follows is one big spoiler, so if you intend on exploring 1,000 generations of *Star Wars* lore yourself, please, avert thy gaze now. But if you're ready to learn about and re-live the best battles, the most tragic scenes, the best deaths, and even the best births in all of *Star Wars*, it's right here. We've also included a humorous look at five of the most...ahem...least appreciated moments in the expanded *Star Wars* mythology, moments that some fans might rather forget altogether.

Let the controversy begin!

The Death of Chewbacca

New Jedi Order: Vector Prime

In 1999, the *New Jedi Order* multibook story arc began, and from the outset with R.A. Salvatore's *Vector Prime*, it promised to be an Expanded Universe story line unlike any other.

The Yuuzhan Vong, an alien invasion force a generation in the making, launched its initial strike in the Outer Rim, crashing a moon, Dobido, into the heavily populated planet, Sempidal. Han Solo, Chewbacca, and Anakin Solo would find themselves engaging in rescue operations, attempting to evacuate as many sentients as time permitted. However, under the strain of severe gravitational forces and trapped planetside with Anakin, Chewbacca would use his strength to hurl Anakin onto the *Millennium Falcon*, saving the son of his dearest friend. Raging against the crash of Dobido, it would take the annihilation of a planet to defeat the mighty Chewbacca. A life debt fulfilled. A friendship for life ended. The death of Chewbacca, for the first time, brought irreparable tragedy to the Heroes of Yavin, and from this point forward, no one would ever be safe again.

Vader Remembers See-Threepio

Tales #6 "Thank the Maker"

Many fans have asked, "Why doesn't Darth Vader seem to recognize C-3PO on Cloud City in *The Empire Strikes Back*?" Writer Ryder Windham and illustrator Killian Plunkett took this bothersome question and ran with it to create one of the most poignant moments in the *Star Wars* mythos.

After Threepio has been blasted to pieces by Imperials on Cloud City, the parts are brought to Darth Vader, causing the Sith Lord to recall when he first assembled the protocol droid during his time as an optimistic slave on Tatooine. Cutting between scenes of young Annie pleading with his mother to keep the beat-up droid who is "just like us," and Vader's preparations to lure Luke into a trap using his friends as bait, the story builds to a heart-rending climax as Vader nostalgically holds Threepio's severed head. The scene is guaranteed to move any who have ever reflected on the forsaken ideals and dreams of innocent youth.

Honorable Mention: Young Anakin first kills in anger (*Rogue Planet*)

Enter General Grievous

Clone Wars Cartoon, Chapter 20

In chapter 20 of the *Clone Wars* microseries cartoon, the commander of the Separatist armies, General Grievous, makes his flashy first appearance. In the extended finale to the first volume, we witness a group of Jedi hounded by an unseen foe. One impetuous Jedi, seemingly crazed by the cat-and-mouse game, rushes out of his hiding place to face the cyborg only to be stomped out of existence by the monstrous general. The lightsaber-toting Grievous then proceeds to take on a half-dozen Jedi with spectacular moves and frightening ease, fighting at times with no less than three laser swords in hand (or foot, as it were). Animators Genndy Tartakovsky, Paul Rudish, and others go to town to create an unforgettable debut for Episode III's fearsome new villain.

Honorable Mention: Boba Fett makes his first appearance (*The Star Wars Holiday Special*)



Heirs of the Sith: Anakin Skywalker Meets Asajj Ventress

Animated Clone Wars, Chapters 17, 18, 19

Inspired by a conceptual drawing of a female Sith villain by Episode II artist Dermot Power, the Separatist dark side Force wielder Asajj Ventress was featured in the Clone Wars and tasked with the elimination of Anakin Skywalker. The first of several memorable lightsaber duels between Asajj and

Anakin was highlighted by animators Genndy Tartakovsky and Paul Rudish in Chapters 17, 18, and 19 of the Clone Wars micro-series.

Wielding twin red-bladed lightsabers with curved handles, the exotic and deadly Ventress would lure Skywalker away from the Battle of Muunilinst to the remote jungle moon Yavin 4, from which the Rebels would launch their attack on the Death Star some 20 years later. Fueled by a hatred of the Jedi and inspired to ascend to the ranks of the Sith, Asajj's epic fight with Anakin leads from the jungle canopy into the ruins of Yavin 4. Clashing



on the sacrificial summit of a derelict temple as torrents of rain pour down, both Asajj and Anakin are aglow in the light of their blades, until Anakin taps into his rage, drawing on the Force to overpower Asajj and cast her body into the depths of an enormous abyss. Awash in triumph and anger, Anakin sends a blood-curdling scream after his defeated foe.

Gifted with bringing out the best and the worst in Anakin, Asajj would eventually return in other Clone Wars era tales, leaving her mark on *Revenge of the Sith* in the form of a scar across Anakin's right eye.

The Artistic Fate of Grand Admiral Thrawn

The Last Command

Fans love an interesting villain, and few have grabbed hold of readers like the charismatic military genius Grand Admiral Thrawn. An Imperial villain in complete contrast to Darth Vader, Thrawn was blessed with an ability to deduce cultural tendencies from a species' artwork, to perceive an opponent's next move with near certainty, and to motivate his legions into war through loyalty and trust.

Author Timothy Zahn introduced readers to Thrawn in a trilogy of books set five years after Palpatine's death, beginning with *Heir to the Empire*. The warlord would go on to conquer 75 percent of former Imperial territory in less than a year and place the fledgling New Republic on the brink of extinction. In the final novel, *The Last Command*, Thrawn is killed at the height of his success, a payback for perpetuating an Imperial deceit. With Thrawn seated in his command chair, his trusted Noghr assassin seizes the moment to drive a blade through Thrawn's chest, retribution for the betrayal of an entire people. As Thrawn's blood flows, slowly staining his pristine white Grand Admiral's uniform, his last words express admiration for his own assassination: "But it was so artistically done."

Boba Fett Escapes the Sarlacc

Various

"The Sarlacc found me somewhat indigestible." The scene of Boba Fett's escape from the Sarlacc has been depicted numerous times and in numerous ways. Popular *Star Wars* artist Dave Dorman in his illustration "In the Great Pit of Carkoon" and the toy makers at Hasbro with its Boba Fett Unleashed figure have both created dramatic depictions of Boba Fett blasting his way out of the Sarlacc while the creature does its best to suck the bounty hunter back down its gullet. Both of these may be variations on the earliest version of Boba's escape from the Sarlacc, seen in the Marvel Comics issue #81, "Jawas of Doom." But at the end of this story, Boba ends up right back in the belly of the beast.

The most complete recounting of Boba's escape is in J.D. Montgomery's story, "A Barve Like That" in the *Tales From Jabba's Palace* anthology. Here, we learn that the Sarlacc is a sentient, bitter creature deriving gross pleasure from devouring its victims over a thousand years. In this story, Boba emerges naked, horribly scared, and blistered, his armor eaten away by the Sarlacc's corrosive digestive juices. Regardless of how (or how many times) he escaped the Sarlacc, Boba's defiance of an ignominious death in *Return of the Jedi* is a much-celebrated incident.

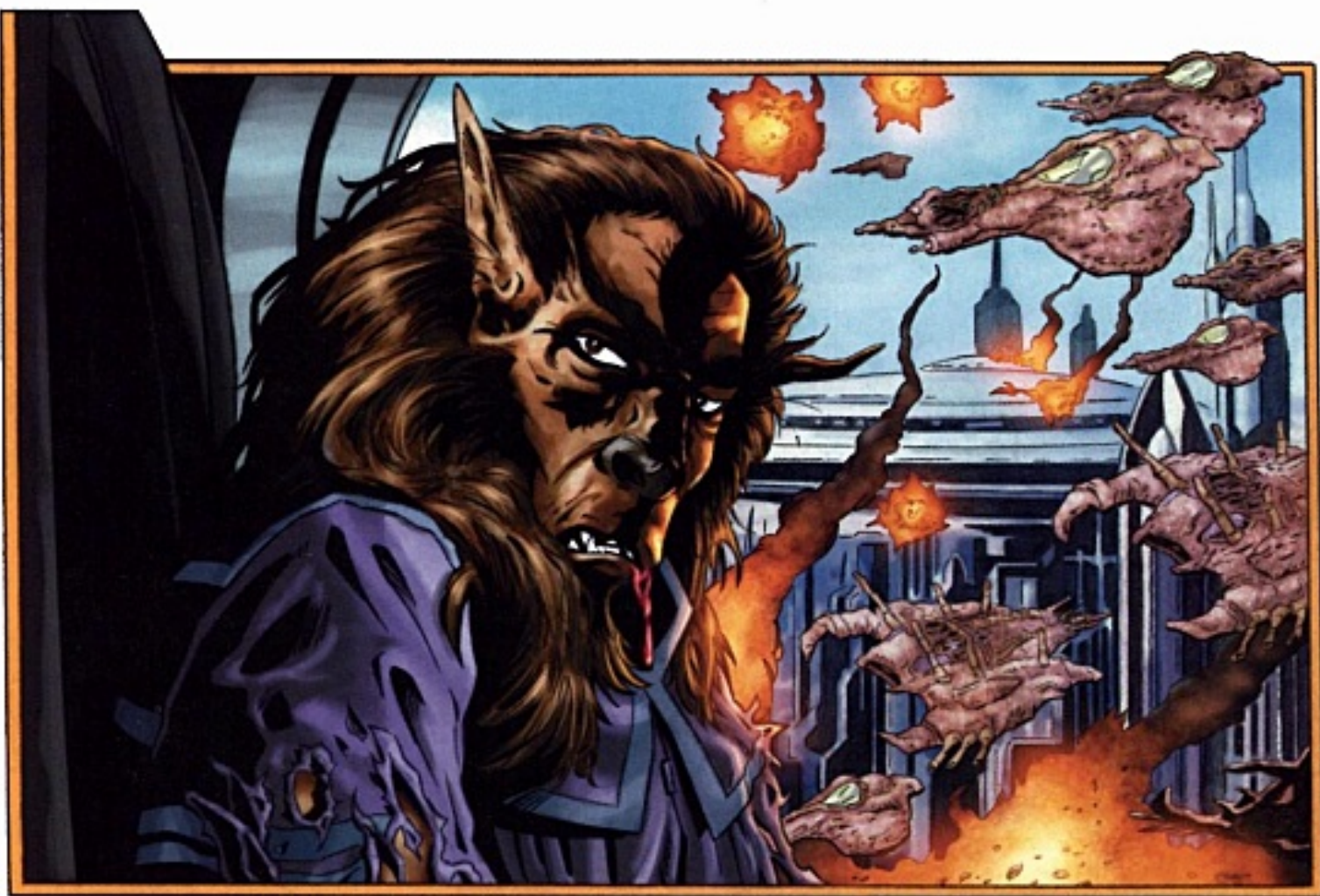
Honorable Mentions: The Boba Fett and Han Solo standoff on Jubilar (*Tales of the Bounty Hunters*, "The Last One Standing"), Boba Fett hunts down the poser Jodo Kast (*Boba Fett: Twin Engines of Destruction*)

Jacen Solo Descends into the Rings of Hell

New Jedi Order: Traitor

There are times when a hero's unwillingness to take action can frustrate a reader to no end. During the Yuuzhan Vong Invasion, when most Jedi were questioning how to take action against the invaders, Jacen Solo was questioning what it meant to be a Jedi.

In Matthew Stover's novel, *Traitor*, Jacen found himself deep behind enemy lines, a Yuuzhan Vong captive and an experiment in terror. Driven by an uncertain purpose, goaded by an unusual mentor, and tortured by an uncommon alien adversary, Jacen is confronted by a symbolic death, descends into the physical and psychological rings of hell, and undergoes one of the more exciting Hero's Journeys in *Star Wars* history. Granted a



spiritual rebirth, Jacen makes a triumphant return, transformed into an avatar of the will of the Force. A Jedi Knight unlike any other, Jacen would challenge our definitions of the Force and challenge readers to question whether everything they had ever learned was a lie.

Borsk Fey'lya, A Noble End for the Guy You Love To Hate *New Jedi Order: Star by Star*

For anyone frustrated by inept bureaucracy and endless delay through political decision by committee, the Expanded Universe one-ups that frustration with the introduction of the Bothan President Borsk Fey'lya, who becomes synonymous with the image of the New Republic.

In Bothan politics, you never handle matters directly. Rather, you gather sensitive information, you build alliances, you outmaneuver your opponent, and when the moment is ripe, you crush your adversary....convincingly. Readers hated no politician more than Borsk Fey'lya. Introduced in Timothy Zahn's *Heir to the Empire*, Borsk would eventually find himself New Republic Chief-of-State by the time the *New Jedi Order* story arc began. In *Star by Star*, Troy Denning delivers a side of this Bothan that would forever change our perceptions. The book features the Yuuzhan Vong conquest of Coruscant. Yet if this conquest was going to be the definitive moment in Fey'lya's life, Borsk was going to define that moment on his own terms. First attempting to lure Warmaster Tsavong Lah into a "Kintan strider death gambit," Fey'lya detonates a proton bomb, killing himself along with 25,000 of his would-be captors in the process. Yet in the larger picture, Fey'lya's death punctuates the fall of Coruscant, which would be transformed by alien bio-organic technology into the Yuuzhan Vong homeworld, Yuuzhan'tar, effectively signaling the end of the New Republic.

Honorable Mention: Anakin Solo becomes one with the Force (*New Jedi Order: Star by Star*).

Luke Duels with Darth Vader for the First Time... Before *The Empire Strikes Back* *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*

No one can forget that chilling moment when Luke looked up toward Vader's haunting silhouette in Cloud City's carbon freezing chamber before their first duel. But for those who've read the novel *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*, written by Alan Dean Foster, that initial duel between Sith Lord and son took place before Vader and Luke's big-screen meeting.

Published one year after the release of *A New Hope*, *Splinter* tells the story of Luke, Leia, and Vader all in pursuit of the enigmatic Kaiburr Crystal, an artifact that amplifies Force powers tenfold. The novel unexpectedly climaxes with an unapologetic, full-on battle not only between father and son but father and daughter! The duel is significantly lopsided until luck, or the Force, grants Luke a chance blow that saves him and Leia from Vader's wrath. Foster's portrayal of Vader as an inhuman and unstoppable Frankenstein-like foe lends this "first" confrontation a nightmarish desperation that is distinct from its screen counterpart but equally breathtaking.

Honorable Mention: Luke duels his evil clone, Luuke (*The Last Command*)

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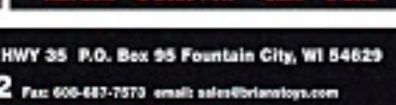
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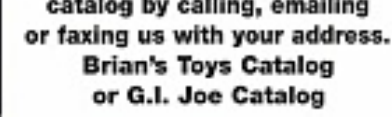
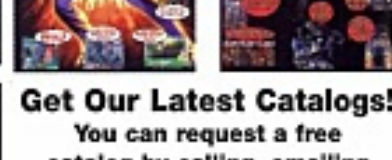
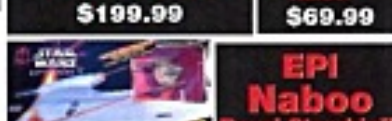


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The Death of Ton Phanan

X-Wing: Solo Command

Without the flash of visuals and music that fans of the *Star Wars* films are used to, it's not often that the death of a nonmovie character can profoundly move us. However, author Aaron Allston does precisely that in one of his *X-Wing* novels.

Allston, well known for his ability to make readers laugh themselves silly, introduced *Star Wars* fans to a collection of misfits and troublemakers specializing in infiltration and demolitions in *X-Wing: Wraith Squadron*. For fans, the *Wraith X-Wing* novels provided one of the more engaging and outright humorous elements of the Expanded Universe with the introduction of two prosthetic-heavy pilots, Ton Phanan and scar-faced Garik "Face" Loran. However, in *X-Wing: Solo Command*, Ton and Face find themselves grounded on the planet Halmad with Ton severely injured. Face does everything he can to save the life of his friend but doesn't succeed, bringing an end to one of the greatest friendships in the Expanded Universe. Yet in death, Ton would give Face a true gift among friends, the guidance and the means to heal Face's psychological wounds and rejuvenate his spirit.

Darth Vader vs. Darth Maul

Tales #9, "Resurrection"

It's an uphill battle whenever a storyteller has to live up to advance hype. And what could garner more hype than a knockdown, drag-out brawl between two of the baddest villains to ever menace movie audiences. Writer Ron Marz and illustrator Rick Leonardi deliver in this one-of-a-kind slugfest between the classic trilogy's Darth Vader and the prequels' death machine, Darth Maul.

On a cursed moon, Maul is miraculously resurrected through the power of the dark side and challenges Vader's claim to the Sith legacy. The two Dark Lords duel furiously in the planet's molten caverns. In the breathtaking finale, Vader faces away from his enemy on bended-knee, while Maul stands poised to deliver the killing blow. At the last possible moment, however, Maul is skewered by Vader in a harakiri-esque feint. Vader, more machine than man, drives his lightsaber through his own gut in order to impale the rival Dark Lord behind him. Maul, who believes the depth of his hatred rightfully entitles him to the station of Sith apprentice, asks before dying, "What...what could you hate enough to destroy me?" Vader answers simply, "Myself."

Honorable Mention: The cyborg Valance the Hunter faces off against Darth Vader (*A Long Time Ago Vol. 2: Dark Encounter*, "Dark Encounter").

Luke vs. Lumiya

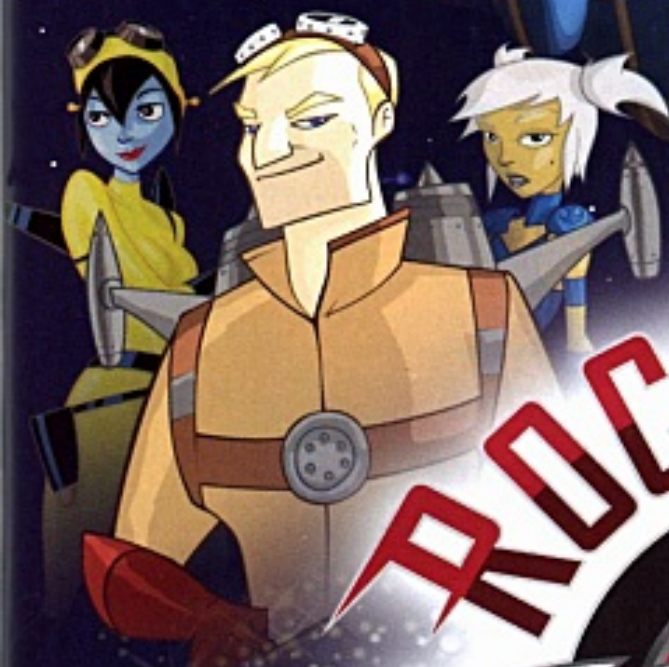
Star Wars: A Long Time Ago Vol. 7: Far, Far Away, "No Zeltrons," and "Duel with a Dark Lady"

With the death of Darth Vader and the Emperor, the Rebel Alliance has established the temporary government of the Alliance of Free Planets, precursor to the New Republic. But all is not well in the galaxy. A group of gaunt and sadistic aliens from beyond the Outer Rim have allied themselves with a group of Imperials led by a powerful warlord, Vader's apprentice, the Dark Lady Lumiya.

Writer Jo Duffy lets the panels of the comic do the talking as Luke tracks the cyborg darksider to a hilltop on the planet Kinocine where the two combatants engage in a battle so fierce, it had to unfold over two issues. Artist Cynthia Martin's design of a "female Vader" is so striking that the character enthralled readers at first glance. With no sound and no words, Luke's Jedi



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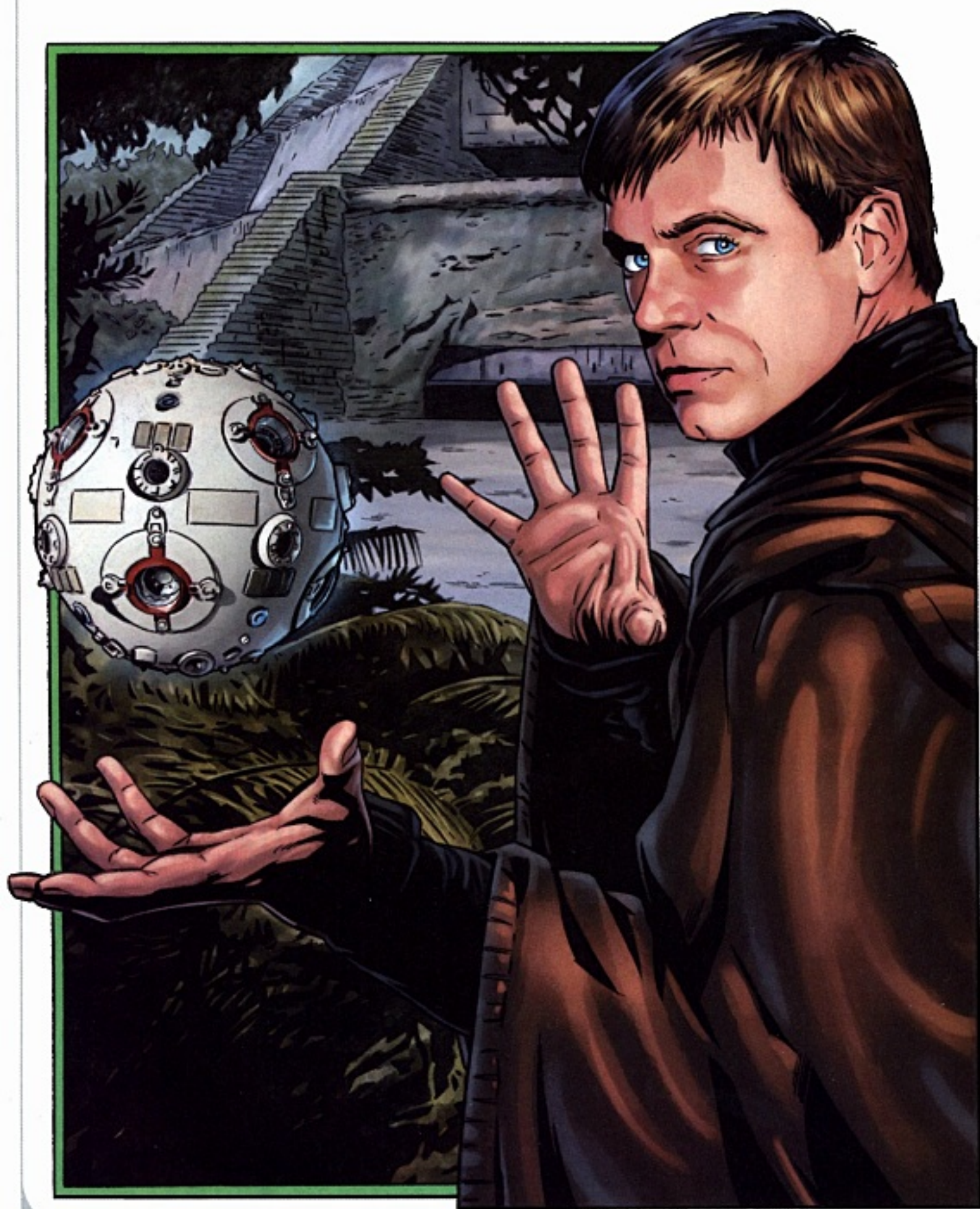
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lightsaber proves deficient against the bizarre and spellbinding power of Lumiya's malleable Sith lightwhip. A battered Luke is soundly defeated by the lethal energy and metal tendrils of the darksider's weapon and apparently left for dead.

Luke Skywalker Creates a Jedi Academy

The Jedi Academy Trilogy & I, Jedi

The movie titles *A New Hope* and *Return of the Jedi* carry multiple meanings, but one possible meaning for fans is a Star Wars future filled with Jedi Knights. Taking a cue from the legendary Jedi Knight Nomi Sunrider, "We must trust in the Force. As long as there are Jedi Knights, there is hope."

As a Jedi Knight, Luke Skywalker achieved his ultimate goal in the defeat of the Emperor and the redemption of Anakin Skywalker. Seven years later, Luke finds himself the galaxy's lone Jedi Master. Placing his trust in the Force, Luke turns his responsibilities toward restoring the Jedi Order. Kevin J. Anderson's *The Jedi Academy Trilogy* and Michael A. Stackpole's *I, Jedi* begin the stories of Luke Skywalker's first class of Jedi students, including their recruitment, their personal challenges and failures, and their respective confrontations with the Empire and the dark side. This new generation of Jedi students becomes a new hope for the return of the Jedi order.

Aayla Secura Appears on the Big Screen

Episode II: Attack of the Clones

In the past, George Lucas' nods to the Expanded Universe have been below the radar, such as including labor droids from *Shadows of the Empire* in the special edition release of *A New Hope*, or using the name Coruscant for *The Phantom Menace*. However, when Lucas decided to borrow an entire character, Twi'lek Jedi Aayla Secura, from Dark Horse's *Republic* comic series for *Attack of the Clones*, Star Wars fans flipped.

Lucas was struck by Jon Foster's painted cover for Issue #33 of Dark Horse's monthly *Star Wars* series, featuring the blue-skinned Twi'lek created by writer John Ostrander and illustrator Jan Duursema. For the first time, fans were able to see one of their favorite characters created outside the films come alive, walking the halls of the Jedi Temple and fighting for her life against the droid armies of the Separatists in the Battle of Geonosis. Played by Amy Allen, Aayla also appears in *Revenge of the Sith*.

Crix Madine, A Life in Service to the New Republic

Darksaber

Early in the Expanded Universe, a film character just didn't die in a non-film related story. Kevin J. Anderson changed that reality in his novel, *Darksaber*.

In *Return of the Jedi*, Crix Madine was the Rebel Alliance General responsible for developing the plans to neutralize the shield generators on the forest moon of Endor. The Expanded Universe fleshed out Madine's back history as a former leader of the elite Imperial Storm Commandos whose troops carried out a mass genocide of inhabitants of a rebellious planet. Haunted by this horror of inaction, Madine defected to the Rebel Alliance and used his military expertise to prevent further atrocities against the innocent. Eight years after the Battle of Endor, Madine sacrifices his life on a deadly mission to locate the Darksaber, a planet-destroying space weapon constructed by the Besadii Hutt Clan. An honorable man haunted by the deaths of millions, Madine gave his life in service to the ideals of the New Republic and became the first hero from the *Star Wars* films to die in the Expanded Universe.

Exar Kun Gives in to the Dark Side

Tales of the Jedi: Dark Lords of the Sith

Before the prequels, the *Tales of the Jedi* comics gave us our first glimpse of what Jedi life was like in the Republic. In *Dark Lords of the Sith* by writers Tom Veitch and Kevin J. Anderson and illustrators Chris Gossett and Art Wetherell, we are introduced to the ambitious and talented Jedi Exar Kun, and given an example of the seductive power of the dark side.

Pursuing forbidden knowledge, Kun encounters the spirit of the evil Sith Lord Freedon Nadd, who tempts Kun with the fascinating secrets of the dark side and little by little lures him to the point of no return. Guiding Kun to the Sith temples on Yavin 4, the Sith wraith springs his trap, crushing Kun to a pulp beneath tons of stone. Kun, realizing the error of his desires for dark knowledge, cries out to his Jedi Master for help. But with no help forthcoming and death encroaching, Kun chooses the quick and easy path. As dark energies put Kun's flesh and bones back together, the young Jedi lets out a tortured scream that echoes across the galaxy. "A sound," a faraway Jedi comments. "Like a man being eaten alive...or is it the wind?" Exar Kun's transformation into one of the most powerful Dark Lords has begun.

The Redemption of Ulic Qel-Droma

Tales of the Jedi: Redemption

The Expanded Universe is filled with stories of tragedy and personal loss. One of the most tragic stories revolves around the life of legendary Jedi Knight Ulic Qel-Droma.

Dark Horse Comics delved into the life of the Jedi order centuries before the films with the *Tales of the Jedi* stories. In *Redemption*, writer Kevin J. Anderson and illustrator Chris Gossett returned to the life of Ulic Qel-Droma, a former Jedi Knight and a former Sith Lord. Now a guilt-ridden exile stripped of the Force, Ulic wanders the galaxy waiting for death. But *Redemption* is a story of hope. Though Force blind, Ulic maintains a connection to the will of the Force. Fate intervenes in the form of a troubled, runaway Jedi hopeful, Vima Sunrider, the daughter of Ulic's former love interest Nomi Sunrider, who stripped him of his powers. On a forgotten ice planet, Rhen Var, Ulic readies an apprentice for knighthood, rebuilds the relationship between mother and daughter, saves a Jedi from the dark side, and through compassion and forgiveness, rehabilitates his soul. *Redemption* tells the story of how a fallen Jedi becomes a Master of the Force.

The Pregnancy of Mara Jade Skywalker

Balance Point

For years, fans wondered if Luke Skywalker, Jedi Knight, would ever find love. Fans were divided into two camps, favoring one of two remarkable women: Callista Ming and Mara Jade. Eventually, in Timothy Zahn's *Vision of the Future*, Luke Skywalker finds his perfect companion in Mara Jade.

Years later, during the events of the *New Jedi Order*, Mara becomes a victim of alien sabotage. She fights for her life after being infected with a deadly coomb spore virus, courtesy of a Yuuzhan Vong agent. Blessed with the intervention of the will of the Force, the alien Vergere provides Mara Jade with a temporary reprieve from the effects of the coomb spores and a hope for survival. In a surprising revelation in *Balance Point*, author Kathy Tyers breaks the big news: Luke and Mara Jade Skywalker are going to be parents.



secrets to find a way to permanently destroy the Emperor before the dark side consumes Luke instead.

Ganner Rhysode, A Hero at the Gates *New Jedi Order: Traitor*

"This threshold is mine. I claim it for my own. Bring on your thousands, one at a time or all in a rush. I don't give a damn." The snap-hiss of a lightsaber is always the ignition point of anticipation, whether it comes from Darth Maul on Naboo, Mace Windu on Geonosis, or Obi-Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader on a

Death Star. The Star Wars Expanded Universe has provided its own share of memorable lightsaber moments, but one stands out above all others.

Trapped in the underbelly of Yuuzhan'tar, Jedi Knight Ganner Rhysode finds himself alongside Jedi Knight Jacen Solo, at the entrance to the Well of the World Brain, with hordes of Yuuzhan Vong in pursuit. Their fate is sealed with no escape. Yet in an inspirational feat of heroism, Ganner Rhysode goes against the grain of his personal weaknesses, his own self-doubts, and his own fear of death. In *Traitor*, Matthew Stover tells the tale of a Jedi with delusions of grandeur, yet a Jedi

who surrenders to the Force, places himself between Jacen Solo and the Yuuzhan Vong masses, and gives us one of the most action-packed lightsaber fights in Expanded Universe history. "None shall pass," Ganner boldly proclaims.

The Five Goofiest Moments of the Star Wars Mythos

While nearly three decades of contributions by storytellers other than George Lucas have yielded some great Star Wars moments, there have been some slight bumps along the road to creating this massive and diverse shared mythology. Here we present five of the most...interesting...moments in the Star Wars mythos.

The Emperor Reborn *Dark Empire*

"It was not the first time I died...nor will it be the last. Such are the mysteries of the dark side of the Force." Emperor Palpatine lives! In the *Dark Empire* comic series, writer Tom Veitch and artist Cam Kennedy make every Star Wars fan's worst nightmare come true. Thought to be destroyed by Darth Vader on the Second Death Star, the Emperor has somehow cheated death using the very cloning technology that brought him to power.

The Emperor summons Luke Skywalker to his citadel on the dark-side world of Byss, where the master strategist reveals to Skywalker the startling truth of his potential immortality. The horror is only compounded when Luke realizes he has only one recourse against an enemy who is eternal: to join Palpatine, learn his dark-side secrets, and—hopefully—use those

5) Introducing Jaxxon, The Lopus-carnivorous
(A Long Time Vol. 1: Doomworld, "Eight For Aduba-3")

"Jaxxon, You can call me Jax for short...which I ain't." It has been said that if there's a poster child for rejects of the Expanded Universe, the seven-foot-tall, carnivorous, street-talkin' green bunny, Jaxxon, is it.

Created by writer Roy Thomas and illustrator Howard Chaykin, the silly rabbit appeared in the eighth issue of Marvel's *Star Wars* comic, the very



first spin-off story line that was an actual continuation of *A New Hope*. The karate-kickin' Jaxxon is only one part of an oddball group of intergalactic do-gooders that also includes Han and Chewie. The octet is hired by farmers as protection against a band of raiders, in homage to Akira Kurosawa's classic film *Seven Samurai*.

4) The Villainy of Emperor Trioculus and Grand Moff Hissa
(The Glove of Darth Vader)

"I bid you all Dark Greetings!" Older fans have frequently complained about the juvenile nature of *The Glove of Darth Vader*, which, after all, is juvenile fiction. In the book, which takes place a year after *Return of the Jedi*, the three-eyed mutant "Trioculus" and his mentor, the pointy-toothed alien Grand Moff Hissa, seek to crush the Rebels and to inherit rule of the Empire by securing the indestructible glove of Darth Vader.



While criticisms of the book as too simple-minded is unfair, it's difficult for older readers to ignore the cartoon quality of the villains and the book's propensity for 1950s Batman-like spurts of onomatopoeia. (For instance: "EEEE-AAAAA-EEEE-AAAAA...An alarm siren sounded in the Senate. Security had been violated. KCHOOOING! KCHOOOING!") Praised by younger readers, the book and the others in the same series do have their adult proponents. The dramatic scene shared between a dying Emperor Trioculus and his

Grand Moff mentor is often defended as being among the most affecting in *Star Wars* literature, regardless of the intended audience.

3) Take Your Pick (The Star Wars Holiday Special)

Where to even begin? With the offenses running the gamut from costumes (cheap) to make-up (disturbing), acting (bad), and special effects (painful), the *Holiday Special*'s reputation as impossible to watch is well earned. We might have used moments from the special all by itself to fill this section of least appreciated *Star Wars* moments, but we have bigger Calamari to fry. Still, if we had to pick just one moment from the *Special*, it might be the first 30 minutes of the show spent in the home of Chewbacca's wife, son, and father, during which viewers are treated to a half-hour of continuous incomprehensible Wookiee growls.

The infamous *Holiday Special* has its cult followers, who enjoy the program for its value as an anomaly in the *Star Wars* mythos. Many are also quick to point out the cartoon segment of the *Special* as a hidden gem, harboring the very first appearance of the fan-favorite character Boba Fett.

2) Ewoks...on Ice! (The Ewoks and the Magic Sunberries)

They've had their own TV movies, cartoon series, and comic books, but in the year 1986, the Ewoks of Endor also laced up their skates and took to ice skating rinks across America.



Part of the Ice Capades' "Bravo America: Bold-Bright-Beautiful" tour—a family-friendly variety show performed on ice—the Ewoks and the Magic Sunberries adventure was the gripping, two-part cliffhanger bridging Bravo America's intermission. Billed as "A Tale for Kids, 3 to 93!" the Ewok production featured song and dance by professional ice skaters in costumes resembling the lovable furballs as depicted in the Ewoks cartoon series, airing on national television at the time. In the story, the Ewoks' troublemaking cousins, the gangly Duloks, are of course out to ruin all the fun. Be-che-wa-wa!

1) Han and Luke in Drag?
(The Planet of Kadriil)

In one of the few old *Star Wars* comics that has not been reprinted in recent years, the heroes of the classic trilogy pay a visit to the planet Kadriil, home of the intelligent Kadriilian reptiloids. Wielding one of the oddest superweapons the *Star Wars* galaxy has ever seen, Darth Vader uses his dreaded Pacifog—a weapon that brings out an individual's worst trait—in order to render the Kadriilians...stupid. But the most comical element is perhaps seeing the dashing leading men Luke and Han saving the day in garish fluorescent pink shirts with petite white collars that would have made that old smoothie Lando cringe. ☹



Didn't see your favorite Expanded Universe moment here? Want to defend *The Star Wars Holiday Special* or Luke and Han's peculiar fashion sense? E-mail us at comlink@insider.starwars.com or send a letter to Comlink, P.O. Box 23500, Oakland, CA 94623-2350 and let us know your favorite moment in *Star Wars* history!



MULTIPLE

For some, the opportunity to appear in even a single *Star Wars* film would be sheer bliss. Silas Carson was given the opportunity times three, and played more characters than Palpatine has faces. *By Brett Rector*

When the news from Lucasfilm broke back in 1994 that another three films were going to be made, the response from fans was simply overwhelming. At the time, it had been 11 years since the release of *Return of the Jedi*, and the thought of seeing continued adventures in the *Star Wars* galaxy was almost too much to bear. Once the euphoria of the news diminished, the next thought was, "How can I get a part?" The only way to calculate those odds would be to bring in a protocol droid, and like Han Solo, we're sure you wouldn't want to hear them.

So while many fans' dreams of *Star Wars* immortality were dashed, there was a select group of acting veterans who received the call, and one of those actors even got to play four roles in *The Phantom Menace*—and two of the roles weren't standard garden variety gigs either, but rather a Jedi Master and the leader of the Trade Federation.

Silas Carson, a 40-year-old British actor, made the jump from the stage and television to become a mainstay on the prequel sets for all three movies. And while the hardworking Carson cut down his character duties by two for *Attack of the Clones* and *Revenge of the Sith*, he was still able to leave his mark by playing one of the most popular characters in the entire saga.

How did you initially become involved with the prequel films?

It all actually started with *The Phantom Menace*. I met with George [Lucas'] casting director at the time, Robin Gurland, for a small pilot role. She enjoyed the interview and talked to George about it. I believe he said I looked like an interesting guy and asked that I come in and do some animatics, which is kind of like storyboarding for a whole sequence using bluescreen backgrounds, aliens, and stuff. I did that for a day, and we got along great. So I got the little part as the pilot.

At what point did you learn about the role of Ki-Adi-Mundi?

I was in the creature shop and began looking at a cast of Ki-Adi-Mundi. I started talking to the people in the shop about it, telling them it looked like a beautiful character. I was asked if I would be interested in doing a prosthetics test because I had the right kind of features for the character, just in terms of the structure of my face. So I said yes. During the process we found out that I wasn't claustrophobic as a lot of actors are. The same thing happened with Nute Gunray. I got all three parts.

PERSONALITY



*However, you also played another part in *The Phantom Menace*, correct?*

Yes. I was [the actor] inside Lott Dodd, but I didn't really want to continue doing that character. I wanted to try and keep the prosthetics applications down to a minimum (laughs).

*Normally, George likes to re-record masked character voices during post-production using other voice-actors, yet he let you supply the voices for both your characters. While on set [as Ki-Adi-Mundi] I used my own voice, which I adapted to sound like an old man. George said we could use that, rather than record over it. At that point everyone realized that I was quite versatile [as a voice actor] and asked me later, much later when they were doing the post-production work on *The Phantom Menace*, if I would do the voice for Nute as well.*

What was it like going through the various prosthetic procedures to transform you into two very unique characters? The application of the prosthetic faces for both characters is quite different. For Nute Gunray it was kind of like wearing a helmet, because it went over my whole head. Throughout the three films [the crew] was able to adapt and change the technology for the mask as their ability to do so improved. They would simply fit it over my head, pull the skin over the mask, and then wire up all the mechanics for the face to move. It was a simple application that took about 15 to 20 minutes. It wasn't very comfortable to wear as I was actually inside something.

For Jedi Master Ki-Adi-Mundi I wore prosthetics that were actually stuck to my face. There was the head, the front piece for my face, two cheeks, and then the hair. The material used was a kind of foam latex that was very easy to put on, very easy to wear, and very, very light. It did take a bit longer to apply because everything had to be glued down and repainted to hide the cracks—about two to three hours. However, I actually found it to be quite pleasant.

Didn't it bother you to sit in place for up to three hours while your make-up was being applied?

People would say, "Oh, God, three hours of makeup—that's horrendous!" But it wasn't, really, because it was a lot like theater makeup, [and theater is something] I've done a great deal of in England. You're actually having a character applied to your face, and you get to spend a lot of time, as it were, meditating over the character. You know, you kind of get into character that way.

Did you prefer playing the character of Ki-Adi-Mundi rather than Nute? Playing the Jedi was a lot more conducive to the whole acting process. Being inside Nute Gunray, I mean what you see is all done by electronics and the mechanics of the face—there weren't any actual facial expressions that were my own. As far as I was concerned the acting for that particular character lay in the performance of the voice work. Apart from that I was just moving around—I was a warm prop. With Ki-Adi-Mundi I was able to spend time getting into character, because you can see his face move as I move.

Besides the cosmetics, what were the differences in the two characters? Essentially, one's a goody and one's a baddy. On the one hand you have this kind of wise old Jedi. And because of the way he looks, less like an alien and more like a human being with a weird double skull, I played him as somebody who was very gentle. He's kind of like the uncle you always wanted: he's very human, very warm. On the other hand there's Nute, who is just this cowardly, nasty piece of work—a real parasite. Being able to play both of them was great fun.

As an actor, how did you approach each role?

When doing roles like these, being in prosthetics, you translate a lot of who they are with your body. Ki-Adi has a kind of grace about him, his body is much stiller—he's more elegant—whereas Nute is this very slimy sort of character who is hunched and disappears inside himself. And that's the way I tried to play these characters through all the mechanical, rubbery stuff on the outside, because acting is about the physical presence.

Just as much as you had to act out the physical aspects, you also had the added challenge of providing voices for the two characters.

I felt very honored to do the voices because it's very unusual. In fact, [with the exception of Anthony Daniels (C-3PO)]. I don't think it's ever been done [in a Star Wars film] that the person who is inside the costume voices the character as well. It's standard for George to get other actors to voice over the people who are in the suits, you know, in disguise basically. It was very flattering.



As for the characters, were you surprised they made it into all three films?

George, I believe, writes these kinds of characters as he goes along depending on the sort of response they get from the audience. I'm happy that these characters made it all the way through.

How did it feel to work on all three films with a lot of the same people?

It was really fun because it happens very seldom in movies. Of course nowadays people are starting to make two or three films in one go, like *The Lord of the Rings* and *Matrix*. As an actor in movies, you don't get to see a great many people because you spend a lot of time sitting around in your trailer. I think it's a good thing to get to know the same people and be able to work with them because you work more tightly as a team. It's like working with a little family, and I think it's conducive to good work.

Stepping back for a moment, before beginning your prequel journey, were you a fan of Star Wars?

The truth of the matter is I'd never seen any of the *Star Wars* movies before working [on the prequels]. I didn't even know they were going to be remaking them. When I was a child I grew up in a part of England located on beautiful countryside by the beach, and going to the cinema and theater were just not part of my upbringing as I was more of an outdoors person—the whole thing just passed me by. I knew of *Star Wars*, but I didn't really know anything about them. I watched the three original films, all of them, the day before I started filming *The Phantom Menace*.

Did you do any research beforehand to prepare yourself?

I started reading a lot of Joseph Campbell, *The Hero of a Thousand Faces* and various other books, because I knew that George had read him back in the 1970s while [completing his first script]. That for me was interesting.

What stood out most in your mind about the original trilogy?

The mythology of it, really. It's kind of a mixture of all different kinds of mythological ideas. When I started at drama school we did a play that had never been performed before called *The Surgeon of Honor*. It was an amazing 17th century Spanish play about honor, and the whole of Spanish society in those days was based on honor codes. What struck me when I first saw *Star Wars* was the mythological hero's journey and the whole concept of honor, which is what the Jedi order upholds. They're kind of like the old knights of England. All of those overtones intrigued me.

So even though Star Wars is presented as a space fantasy in a futuristic setting, the concepts aren't futuristic.

They're not futuristic; they're very, very basic and they seek to answer mankind's question of what are we doing here, who are we, and what is our relationship with God. And that was the origin of all theater;



that was the origin of drama, the Greek dramas that always questioned the relationship between human beings and gods. And George has brought some of that out in the movies.

Do you think that not being a fan beforehand helped or hurt you?

I think it was kind of a good thing, actually. I like the fact that I came into it completely clean. For me it was about working a certain way, a different type of technique. Like the difference between television acting or film acting or theater acting or any other kind of performance—they're all about different kinds of techniques. I may have been somewhat sullied if I had been a fan, I think. Having since worked on them, I'm now a great admirer.



How do you feel about this being the final Star Wars film?

I think it's sad for everybody to see it come to an end as it's been a very pleasurable journey. Plus, it's been quite a long time—we started shooting *The Phantom Menace* almost nine years ago. But there's always a right time to move on, and the right time is when the going is good. ☺





By Steve Sansweet

Searching Out Cool Sith Stuff

THIS JUST IN: THE 'EXPERT' ADMITS TO...TO...AN ERROR!



We suspect Insider's *DarthMallows™* could be the next big collectible if they were put in production.

Find anything interesting to buy lately? Yes, I'm joking. Right after a *Star Wars* movie hits the screen, there is enough merchandise out there to satisfy just about any casual fan or avid collector, no matter what his or her own collecting passion may be. For me, however, there's been a qualitative difference in the "stuff" put out there for *Revenge of the Sith*.

The Hasbro toys have never been better, from the sculpts and features of the action figures to the cool new vehicles, especially the ARC-170. How can you not take that beauty out of the box and play with it? I don't care whether you're 7 or 70—this is one cool toy! LEGO has come up with an exciting assortment, and somehow they've even figured out how to put light-up lightsabers in some of the tiny LEGO figures.

How about the high-end items? Master Replicas keeps its hot streak going with both its light-up sabers and stunning exact replicas of weapons. Code 3 is there with its die cast

vehicles and a great new line: sculpted 3D movie posters. Several licensees have scored with high-quality art, from one-of-a-kind matted and framed Clone Wars cells (Acme Archives) to reproductions of great works on canvas that are so astonishingly realistic that you'd swear they were hand-painted (Animated Animations).

Even the QSR (quick serve restaurant) premiums are amazing. In the U.S. alone, Burger King's line of 31 collectibles demand to be played with and put on shelves because they're so cool looking. A lot of the items from Cards inc. in the U.K. (some of which have been offered on www.starwarsshop.com) range from the beautiful (quality art posters) to the, um, unusual (a 5-inch tall pewter Darth Vader cork screw to open all that Coruscant cabinet). And don't get me started on the four different *Star Wars* barf... um, air sickness bags from Virgin Atlantic!

In short, I'm broke...but loving it!



Air sickness bags... they prove that anything can become a collectible.



I, Calvin J. Hendry, now have in my possession along with two other intact and unused movie theater tickets [for Episodes I and II], two movie theater tickets attached to each other for Star Wars Episode III for 12:01 midnight May 18, 2005, from the Winrock 6 in a Lucite screw-down holder to preserve them. These unused movie tickets may very well be the only set in the world for the same theater and auditorium. —Calvin J. Hendry, Albuquerque, NM

Nice to hear from you again Calvin (see *Insider* #65). All I can say this time is, what a waste of two good tickets to see a great movie. But we all spend our money in strange ways. You buy theater tickets and don't use them, and I buy Star Wars airline barf bags...and hope never to use them!

As a fellow collector, I thought you above all would appreciate the problem of having an incomplete collection. I just received my Episode III *Revenge of the Sith* souvenir magazine, and gently placed it in my bookcase with the souvenir magazines from the previous movies. But like the missing planet Kamino in the Jedi Temple map-reader, there is a space where the Episode II *Attack of the Clones* magazine should be. As you know, they did not produce one. So, I'm asking you... no...I'm begging you, could you use your influence to see if a magazine can be made for my third-favorite

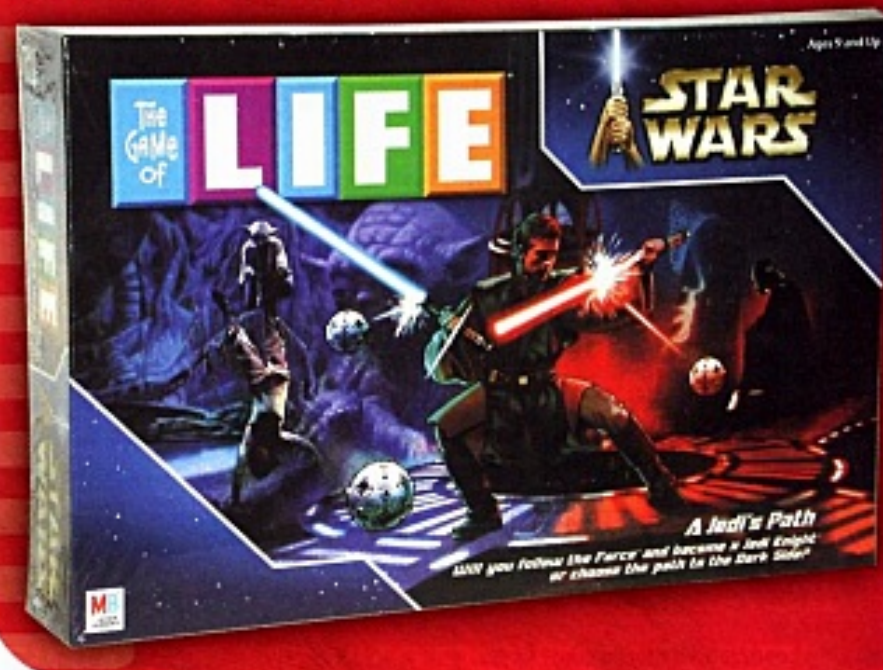


PICK OF THE LITTER

Mea maxima culpa! (Translation: I screwed up.) Well, actually, every now and then I deliberately throw in a wrong answer to see if.... Nah, you'll never believe that. In response to Erich Grosskopf's letter last issue, I said Hasbro hadn't yet made a Star Wars-themed game of Life. Actually, I initially thought THEY HAD, and went into the bowels of Rancho Obi-Wan to find and photograph it. But it wasn't where it should have been. Then I checked a few usually reliable web sites, but no dice. However, my always reliable readers were quick to point out my gaffe. So thanks to David Danion of Wellington, FL; Yacov Freedman of Los Angeles, CA; Brenda Sherrod of Plano, TX; CJ Levine of Pittsburgh, PA; and about a dozen more, some sympathetic and some snide. Then there's this note from Charles R. Davis of Conway, AK:

Hello great and wise Mr. Steve Sansweet. First I just wanna' say that you are so AWESOME.... But I thought that you were all-knowing; well I guess that just like Yoda, you—a known MASTER in your own right—can sometimes fail. But you are still the great one. Anyway in *Insider* B2 there was someone who had mentioned a Star Wars version of Life, and to my amazement, you did not know that there already was one—and guess what? I HAVE IT! YIPPIE!!! Ahem, sorry. Anyway, it was published in 2002 by Hasbro and it's called *Star Wars Life: A Jedi's Path*. But thanks a bunch for all that you do.

I am so happy that I could throw a little joy Charles' way. And I have written on my blackboard one thousand times: ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BOTTOM SHELF!



Star Wars movie, and restore balance back to my bookcase?

—Frank Perez, Brooklyn, New York

How could I ignore such a fervent plea? Actually, there was an Episode II souvenir magazine... just not in the U.S. because the then-publisher of *Insider* decided against it. The magazine instead was put together by the French fan magazine publisher, Courciel, and was also printed in England, Germany, and The Netherlands. I'm not sure if our UK publisher has any back issues to sell, but you can contact them at starwarssubs@titanemail.com.

I recently purchased two sets of the entire collection of premium toys that Burger King offered, one for my personal playing pleasure and the other set (brand new, unopened bags) to stow away for a couple of years hoping to sell them. I was wondering if these toys are worth anything now brand new and if they would be worth anything in the future.

—Francisco Solis, Highlands Ranch, CO

Stop me if you've heard this before, but how much did you pay for them? That's what they were worth to you, which is what counts. (As of this writing, sets were going for \$50 to \$75 on eBay.) As for future price appreciation, these

were produced in staggering numbers and the odds of even modest price appreciation—as much as I love them and as cool as they are—are slim to none in my book.

In the past six years, I have collected every figure from POTF2 on up mint on card, but what I'm really proud of is that I have every single figure from the original trilogy with variations. I am a very picky collector and when I started getting all the original figures I wanted them untouched and mint. I wanted to open them myself so I could display them. So in my search, I looked for damaged or cut cards with figures still sealed in the bubble. I couldn't stand to open a MOC figure, especially a 12-back! I even bought my vinyl Jawa (\$500) and Yak Face (\$400) that way on eBay. Even with poor cards it still cost me a pretty penny to get them all. My question: Do you think it is possible to put a value on a cut or damaged card where the figure is still sealed and mint?

—Matt Verplaetse, Bloomington, IL



Anything's possible, Matt. I understand why you've collected the vintage figures the way that you have, so that you'll get perfect specimens of the toys themselves, as well as all of the accessories. But I'd say that most vintage figure collectors are looking for the mintiest of mint card and bubbles, and are willing to wait and to pay for them. Others may very well disagree, but in my opinion a mint figure on a badly damaged or incomplete (cut) card should be valued at the top of the scale for loose figures—especially if you plan to remove them from the card anyway. In the case of the vinyl Jawa, buying it in that condition was the only way to assure yourself that you were getting the real deal, not a re-cut Ben Kenobi cape. As for Yak Face, I've seen near-mint figures with accessory go for about a quarter of what you paid—but you're guaranteed a gem mint figure.

I am an avid Star Wars fan and also a huge fan of musicals and soundtracks. I have seen various websites displaying proof that a soundtrack was released (and then re-released in 1999) for the Ewok Adventures (Caravan of Courage and Battle For Endor). In light of the recent DVD release of these movies will the soundtrack also see the light of day again? I have searched high and low, but cannot find a copy anywhere. Do you know where I might acquire one?

Next, I have heard of Star Wars: The Musical, which played at Celebration III and involved

Star Wars parodies of Broadway hits. Do you know if there is a cast recording planned for these songs?

Finally, do you know of any other Star Wars soundtracks aside from the films, like the one undertaken with Shadows of the Empire? And are there any future soundtrack projects currently being planned?

—Miker Gaudini, Narberth, PA

To be honest, Miker, I'm not sure there's much call for an Ewoks soundtrack these days. *Star Wars: The Ewoks* was actually first released in 1999 by a Singapore company named Force Records. I must say that searches of eBay and Amazon.com don't turn up anything, but maybe your letter will shake out a few copies.

A cast recording of *Star Wars: The Musical*? Please, don't give those hams any ideas! I'm joking of course; this farce put together by a gang from MIT was funny and well received in Indianapolis, but I think rights issues might preclude a recording. As for other types of soundtracks along the lines of *Shadows*, I'm not aware of any now, but with new *Star Wars* projects in the works, anything is possible. In the meantime you can play that wonderful concept album, *Christmas in the Stars*, which asks the question we've all wondered: "What Can You Get a Wookiee for Christmas (When He Already Has a Comb)?"

I had the pleasure of meeting you at the Wal-Mart Star Wars tent event. Wasn't that a great day? I should have asked you this then but didn't. My Star Wars collection is growing and it's difficult to keep up on what's coming out next. Despite reading fan magazines and Internet sites I feel I might be missing some of the newer items hitting the stores. Is there a resource out there to get this kind of information, or do you have any plans to release a new updated Tomart's guide?

—Dwayne Smith, Windsor, CA

Hi Dwayne! Yes, the 48 Hours of the Force event was a blast, and it was nice to meet you too. It's not the easiest thing in the world to keep up on all the newest releases, especially in a movie year. But there are a number of places I check: starwars.com, the official site, which has been doing a very good job of posting stories and lots of photos of new merchandise worldwide; starwars.hasbro.com, which has gone out of its way to post news of both the regular line and retail exclusives; and fan sites such as rebelscum.com, which constantly get reports from all over about the latest store sightings. As for another official *Star Wars* price guide, there's nothing to report on that front right now, but if anything changes, *Scouting the Galaxy* readers will be the first to know! ☺



We are waiting for the release of "Dianoga's Disco Hits."

Please send your questions and comments about collectibles to: *Scouting the Galaxy*, P.O. Box 2898, Petaluma, CA 94953-2898. Or you may e-mail them to scouting@insider.starwars.com, making sure to put your hometown in the e-mail along with your full name. Letters won't be answered without both your name and city. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, sense, and length.

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STYLISH

What happens when urban street culture crosses paths with that galaxy far, far away? An artistic phenomenon like no other that unites generations both past and present.

By Bonnie Burton/Photos by Tristan Manco



Stormtrooper DJ by Jacob Tedlock (USA)

STAR WARS

Spray Paint and Stencilhoopers: Star Wars Street Art

Imagine crossing paths with Darth Vader in a dark alley. For stencil artists across the globe, this is not only a common occurrence, it's a welcome one. Whether the canvas is an abandoned building in Chicago or a wall in a remote village outside of London, stencil artists have used street art to pay tribute to the pop culture icons that not only entertain us as a film-adoring public but also give dual meanings about art, religion, politics, and the human condition.

According to Stencil Graffiti author Tristan Manco, stenciling is a common form of self-expression with origins dating as far back as 22,000 years ago in the guise of cave paintings where "hand silhouettes were created by blowing paint around a hand placed on a surface to create an inverted imprint." Later, papyrus templates would be used to decorate the walls of Egyptian pyramids. Fast forward to the Art Nouveau and the Art Deco periods when France developed the stenciling technique of "pochoir," which later lent itself to modern-day silk-screening techniques used in the 1950s and 1960s by pop art legends Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg. In the 1970s and the 1980s, punk and new wave fashionistas were donning spray-painted stencil fashions as a counter culture couture statement.

Aside from the DIY fashion statement, stencils also cleared a pathway for artists to take their visions to the public directly, without the stifling barriers of museums or galleries. However, because public and private property serve as the forbidden canvas for stencils, art critics—not to mention numerous legislative groups—deemed stencils as a part of the graffiti world. Yet even though stenciling is illegal in most cities, if you walk in any urban, and sometimes rural, areas, street art is as common as the asphalt itself.

"I love the idea of leaving your own little mark on the city that tells a bit of a story, where you've been, where your head was at the time," says Eelus, a U.K. stencil artist whose stencil of a girl walking a dog-sized AT-AT is legendary in street art circles. "If they stay up for long, they become

part of the surrounding, and they become part of people's everyday lives. A piece of your work can be seen by thousands of people a week without having to be approved by some gallery, and it will hopefully engage them in one way or another.

"There's also the obvious fact that the world is dominated by overpowering advertising campaigns ramming a product or lifestyle choice down our throat at every single turn," Eelus continues. "Why shouldn't we claim back the city for ourselves through engaging, democratic street art whose only purpose is to bring a bit of life and color to what can be a dull, soulless landscape? Street art gives people a voice, a chance to be seen and heard without being certified by an art school or gallery. Anybody can get involved—that's the beauty of it."

Sure enough, anyone who has a simple piece of cardboard, an X-Acto knife, and a can of spray paint can make a stencil, but it's the all-important image that conveys a message burning in the artist's brain that sets some street art apart from others.

Even though Eelus has only just begun participating in the stencil art movement for a few years now, his stencils—which include tributes to AT-ATs from *Star Wars*—can be spotted throughout the streets of East London.

"*Star Wars* is such a great, classic story that everybody has grown up with," Eelus explains. "It has great characters, vehicles, weapons, timeless quotes—almost an endless pool of inspiration. I think it's probably hard to not find a stencil artist who doesn't use sci-fi themes as a main starting point of inspiration, and you can't get more sci-fi than *Star Wars*!"

While Eelus uses AT-ATs in a humorous and playful tone, many other stencil artists take special note of the darker elements of the space saga's storylines.

"You have strong themes of corrupt, power-hungry politicians running the show for themselves and not in the people's interest, wanting to wipe out entire races for simply not fitting into their grand scheme of things as well as resistance groups fighting for freedom," Eelus says.



R2-D2 by Pawel and Szymon (Poland)

Using stencil art as a means for political expression on both sides of the fence is nothing new. During World War II, Italian fascists used stencil art of Il Duce as propaganda, while in the 1970s, Mexicans used the same stenciling concept to gain support in their protests against the government. While many artists use portraits of political figures or historical icons to get the point across, other artists are more subversive with the message by deploying universally known pop culture symbols, such as Darth Vader's stormtroopers, to convey a point to the masses.

"With stencil graffiti originally starting off and continuing to be a subversive means of political protest and propaganda, characters like Darth Vader and his stormtroopers are bound to pop up, especially today when so many of us see the world as being controlled by evil tyrants instituting a reign of terror," Eelus explains.

"Makes you think though, it would have been cool to see some anti-Empire, pro-Old Republic graffiti shown in the films," Eelus laughs. "Maybe Lucas can add some in before the next special-special collectors' edition box set?"

Stormtroopers are not only used to make a pertinent statement against legalized oppression but are sometimes mixed with other politically charged icons to reclaim a history that's been over-exploited to the masses.

...I am your father

?



I Am Your Father? AT-AT by Dolk Langren (Norway)

STREET ART



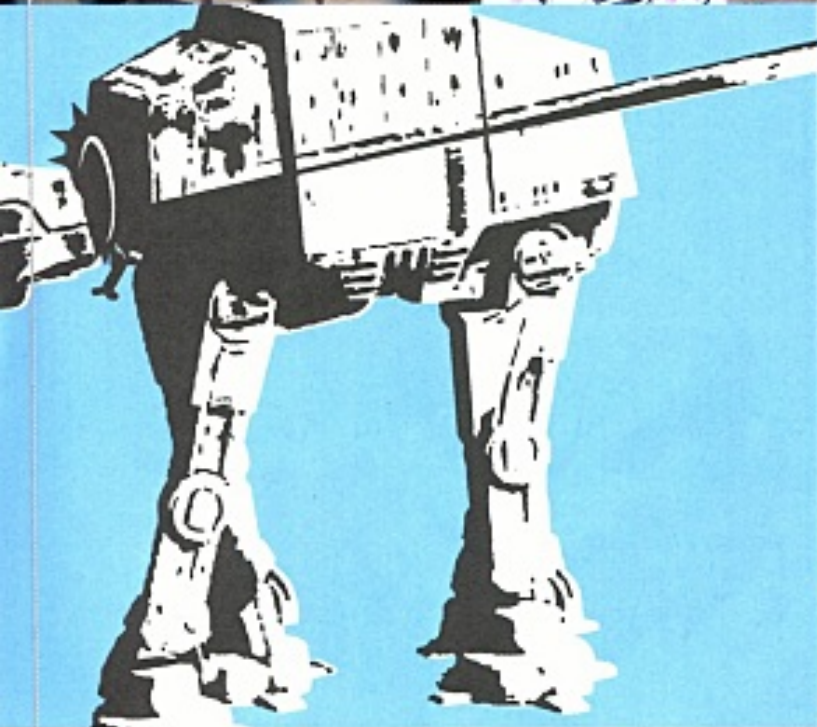
Yoda stencil by unknown artist (U.K.)



Stormtrooper Red5 by Red5 (U.K.)

In early 2001, the husband and wife design duo of Urban Medium—Derek and Heather—created “CheTrooper.” The design, which would be largely distributed as a sticker rather than a stencil, merged the image of the stormtrooper with the memorable attire of the infamous activist Che Guevara.

“The CheTrooper came to us (like many of our pieces) through conversation,” Derek recalls. “One discussion regarding the portrait of Che Guevara came up, about how abused his image had become. In the street art scene, his image had been used to death, reaching a ‘played-out status.’ The overall thought was that nothing could be done to make the image fresh again.”



Girl Walking AT-AT by Eelus (U.K.)



Star Wars
is a big part of
popular culture

R2-D2 Spray Painting a Flower by Max Werz

"During our conversation, I brought up *Star Wars*, the idea of merging the two giant pop culture icons together just happened, and CheTrooper was born," Derek adds. "You can read into the blending deeply—comparing Communism and rebellion to Imperial control—or you can just take it as a great pop culture mash up."

As artist and author Manco gathered more than 400 images around the world for his definitive street art book *Stencil Graffiti*, he would often stumble upon numerous stencils using a wide array of *Star Wars* images in both political and not-so-serious themes including banjo-playing stormtroopers, bunny-eared stormtroopers, and hip-hop AT-AT rappers, among others.

"Because *Star Wars* is a big part of popular culture, stencils and graffiti reflect that," Manco says. "Since the first *Star Wars* film, artists have paid homage to it by including the characters in murals. In fact, one of the seminal graffiti films to date is actually called *Style Wars*."

Due to the wide reaching appeal of the *Star Wars* saga, street artists from Europe, the United States, Africa, Australia, and other parts of the world have all gravitated toward George Lucas' galaxy of Jedi, Sith, droids, and fantastical creatures—often opting out of political messages and just going straight for a collective chuckle.

"I grew up with *Star Wars*, so I guess the main reason for making *Star Wars* art is that so many people can relate to it," Norwegian stencil artist Dolk Lundgren says. "I like to use *Star Wars* characters in strange situations."



Stormtrooper Bunny by Red5 (U.K.)

Herd of Hip Hop AT-ATs by Dolk Lundgren (Norway)

Indeed, Lundgren offers an unusual sense of humor in his work, which features everything from original trilogy vehicles having a touching father-son moment to a rather awkward scene of canine affection towards R2-D2.

While Darth Vader and his intimidating legion of stormtroopers dominate street art themes, it's the little droid who could—R2-D2—who returns again and again as the ultimate favorite muse by numerous street artists.

"R2-D2 is an icon all over the world, but unlike other Star Wars characters, he is the most positive and funniest," Polish stencil artist Pawel (tag name PNC) says. "That's why we have chosen it for one of our stencils and why others do the same."

The Urban Medium duo responsible for the birth of CheTrooper also wanted to make sure Artoo was given his proper street cred as well. Their creation of 'DJ-D2' had the two artists swapping out Artoo's co-pilot attachments for mechanical arms that held not just an old-school boombox, but also the one tool all street artists could instantly identify with—a can of spray paint.

"Remember in *Return of the Jedi* when Artoo is cruising around Jabba's sail barge serving alien drinks?" Derek asks. "Well, I always imagined what Artoo would be doing if he rolled with us. I liked the thought of him cruising through the city with a boombox and a can of spray paint—altering walls with Imperial symbol stencils."

"The Star Wars films rocked our fertile, creative minds," Derek continues. "When we use this imagery, we are essentially playing homage to our childhood and the memories we had when anything was possible." ☺

MORE STENCIL ART RESOURCES

For more information about Star Wars themes and street art in general, please check out these resources:

WEBSITES

Street art by Eelus
eelus.com

Stencil Revolution: More street art
by Eelus, Dolk Lundgren and others
stencilrevolution.com

Urban Medium: CheTrooper and DJ-D2
Urbanmedium.com

Wooster Collective
woostercollective.com

Ekosystem
ekosystem.org

BOOKS

Stencil Graffiti by Tristan Manco
Thames and Hudson

Street Logos by Tristan Manco
Thames and Hudson

Stencil Pirates by Josh MacPhee
Soft Skull Press

MEDSTAR: INTERMEZZO

By Michael Reeves and Steve Perry
Illustrations by Randy Martinez



Jos pried a shard of sharp and jagged durasteel half as wide as his hand from the belly of the wounded trooper and dropped it into the tray Tolk was holding out. It didn't clank when it hit—somebody had gotten tired of hearing that particular noise over and over again, and had lined the metal trays with old sheets of thick and rubbery transponder insulation. Now, when a surgeon pulled shrapnel from a patient and dropped it in the dish, the sound was muffled, a soft thump of little consequence.

Not a bad idea, Jos thought. Of course, the new sound irritated him just as much as the old one had. More, maybe. But then, a lot of things irritated Jos these days. Having to stand there for hours on end and pull chunks of razored metal from charred and scrambled organs was high on that list. It made padding surgical trays to soften the clatter seem fairly pointless.

You sure you want to go there, Jos? his inner voice asked. You sure you want to think about the pointlessness of things? No. He didn't.

Like it made much of a difference what he wanted.

The air coolers were offline again, due to spore-rot: nothing unusual there. The damp tropical heat seeped into the OT, turning the air sodden, raising sweat and not allowing it to evaporate. The smell of mold was omnipresent, easily overwhelming the ozone tang of the antiseptics fields as well as the more unpleasant chemical scent of the herbicide they periodically coated on the walls. The spore infestation had been particularly bad since the move from the Jassera lowlands to the highlands. Everyone was wearing microfilter masks and protective goggles, whether outside or inside. It wasn't paranoia; three humans, a Kubaz, and an Ugnaught were in the infirmary right now being treated for ascomycetous pneumoconiosis. Jos had seen sentients of those species, and others as well, suffering from end-stage fester lung as it was commonly known. It wasn't pretty. Some spiked fevers high enough to literally cook in their own juices.

And the highland area was considered one of the garden spots of the planet.

Jos clamped off a couple of small bleeders and had Tolk sponge the wound. He looked at it with a critical eye. Good enough. The droid could gluestat this one shut, and if the clone trooper didn't get fester lung, spleen-rot, or some other kind of infection from the blasted spores in the next 24 hours, he'd probably survive to fight another day.

"Give him to the droid to close," Jos told Tolk. He sighed. "And tell our next guest his table's ready."

The operating theater was makeshift, even more so than usual, since it had only just been set up. Rimsoos were designed to relocate in a hurry—hence the "mobile" in Republic Mobile Surgical Unit—but they'd only pulled up stakes and moved once since Jos had been on this overcooked world, and that had been less than a week ago. It had seemed the prudent thing to do, given that the Separatists were mounting a major offensive to push the Republic front lines back, tossing mortars, zapping them with lasers and particle beams, and generally blowing the mopek out of the place. The relocation had gone by the

book, according to the official report, with a minimum loss of equipment, patients, and personnel.

Of course, one of the casualties had happened to be Jos' closest friend.

Jos blew out another sigh. It had been almost fifteen minutes since he'd thought about Zan. Must be a new record.

Zan Yant, a Zabrak from the world of Talus, had been a surgeon and an accomplished musician as well as Jos' cube-mate, and a more sympathetic soul one could not have asked for. Now Zan was dead—collateral damage in a war that he'd hated, with a passion that seemed reserved for those of artistic temperament. Zan Yant, scion of a wealthy mercantile family, a composer of classical études, sonatas, conserlistas, and other works of musical genius, was dead, and there was no sense to it, no purpose, and no excuse.

He hadn't suffered; there was that consolation, at least. A sliver of shrapnel, thinner than a bantha hair, had lodged in the Zabrak's anterior ganglion node, at the base of his skull, shutting him down instantly. It had been—so everyone said—analogous to flicking off the master switch on the back of a protocol droid's neck. That quick and painless.

The crucial difference being, of course, that one could always power up a droid again.

A pair of clone troopers, pressed into service as orderlies, wheeled in the next patient. This kind of scout work should have been done by programmed droids but some kind of rust or smut had attacked the seals on many of the mechanicals, and as a result, more than half of them were out of service.

It was an insane situation. He was the Chief Surgeon, after all, and a Captain, the second in command after Colonel D'Arc Vaetes. He wasn't supposed to be elbow-deep in the purplish guts of clone troopers, pulling out scrap metal and staunching bleeders. But the conditions on this world had set the clock back a few millennia, and they now worked shorthanded, under primitive conditions that all too often meted out death instead of renewed life for whoever was under their laser scalpels.

Tolk la Trene, his scrub nurse, looked at the flatscreen report on the next injured clone. "Particle burns, compression injuries, according to the field medic." She rattled off the blood pressure, respiration, and heart rate as Jos nodded absently. All he wanted to do was crawl into his kiosk and sleep—for a week, a month, however long it took for this blasted war to be over. It was too much effort to think, to remember, to even breathe, much less to do surgery. But there was no choice.

"Get him on fluids," he told the other nurse. He turned to Tolk. "How long can we keep him in the bacta tank?"

"Forty-five minutes, tops."

It wasn't enough, Jos knew. And partial treatment of the bullae and necrotic tissue could be worse than no immersion, since it would raise the risk of infection. "Prep him for maser debriding." And wave a few charms over him and chant, while you're at it.

He was so tired and depressed that even the presence of his beloved Tolk, normally more than enough to raise his spirits under the most adverse conditions, failed to cheer him now.



They'd only recently reconciled their differences in the wake of Zan's death, and he felt he should be the happiest lifeform in the galaxy. Instead, he felt a welter of conflicting emotions, not the least of which was guilt for being alive and in love.

He knew he had to go through this. Grief was a process that couldn't be rushed or refused. And Tolk understood. In addition to being a nurse, she was also a Lorrdian; her ability to read the body language of others bordered on telepathy. She knew he needed space—more than anything else right now.

Behind him, shrouded inside a hooded and concealing robe, stood one of The Silent, that mysterious siblinghood whose very presence somehow seemed to help patients recuperate. No one understood if the effect was panacea or placebo, but no one could deny it was real.

Whatever you're using on them, Jos thought, save a little for me.

They'd finally gotten some semblance of a cantina up again, and Den Dhur, ace HoloNet reporter, had been second in line when the doors had opened. He would have been first, but, being a Sullustan, his short height and weight had kept him from bulling past the larger Bothan ahead of him.

Fortunately, Bothans tended to drink the simple stuff, bottled ales and the like, so Balooob, the Ortolan tender, would get to him fast enough. That first drink was the important one; you needed to get that one down fast.

Den saw Doc Vonder a few places behind him, which wasn't exactly a surprise. The cantina had been Jos' second home of late; if he wasn't in the OT pumping fluids into some patient, he was at a table in the dimly lit pub pumping fluids into himself. And who could blame him? His best buddy, the Zabrak surgeon Zan Yant, was only a few days gone. Den wasn't human, but emotions such as grief and loss were pretty much universal. You couldn't be sentient and not feel them.

"Bantha Blaster, right?" the Ortolan asked. He wiped his sweating blue forehead with a bar towel gripped in his stubby trunk.

"Absolutely. And soon as you can see my face through the glass, set up another one."

"No problem. Don't want to have to look at your face any more than necessary," Balooob said. He started building the drink as Den headed for a small and still empty table. He beckoned to Jos on the way.

"Hey, Doc. Over here."

Jos looked at Den as if he had never seen him before but he turned and started toward him. He moved like an undead creature in a horror holo.

Poor human. This was his first war, and Zan Yant had been the first real friend he'd lost to it. Den realized with something of a shock that he couldn't even remember back to his first war and the first friend he'd seen killed—they all just blurred together into one long sense-memory of blood and chaos.

A droid server walked past. Den waved at it, got its attention. "Tell Big Nose to make another Blaster for my friend." He nodded at the approaching Jos.

"Certainly, sir," the droid said, and headed for the bar.

Den settled back and sipped his drink. He wasn't a doctor, but he knew what to prescribe in this particular case.

Barriss Offee walked into the cantina. She didn't really want a drink, and, as a Jedi Padawan, she wasn't supposed to imbibe anyway. It wasn't an interdiction, but the Council did frown on the younger members of the order getting soused. Barriss had ignored that guideline a few times; the last time had been a week ago, when Zan Yant had been killed. She'd had several mugs of ale, more to commiserate with Jos, Den, and the others than to help her cope with the tragedy. The Force was always there with her to aid her in dealing with such things.

She was also tired from her rotation in the medical ward, and sometimes being around other people helped her wind down a bit. While her training as a potential Jedi Knight gave her reserves that most beings were denied access to, still, taking care of the wounded and the dying for a full shift was exhausting, even with the Force's help.

Barriss still wondered why Master Luminara Unduli had sent her here to Drongar. The galaxy needed Jedi Knights far more than doctors in the series of galactic struggles that had come to be known as the Clone Wars. Even though she wasn't technically a knight, having yet to complete her training, still she could not help but feel that her talents were being wasted here. After all, had she not helped defeat Dooku's forces in the arena on Geonosis? Had she not fought side-by-side with the legendary Kenobi and Skywalker on Anison, and been instrumental in brokering a peace treaty there? Try as she might to accept her Master's decision with humility and grace, and as ennobling as the work of healing was, she still sometimes chafed under the yoke of her assignment here.

She saw the reporter Den Dhur and Captain Vondar sitting together, saw the little Sullustan wave at her. She smiled in response.

"Good evening, Jedi Offee," came a voice from behind her.

She turned to see protocol droid I-5YQ entering the cantina behind her.

"I-Five. How are you?" It seemed strange to be asking a droid about its health, but then, I-Five was a singular droid on many levels. Most folk found it difficult, after more than a few minutes of conversation, to think of the unit as an "it"; the proper pronoun in I-Five's case was definitely "he". The personality contained within that positronic brain was far too individual to be sexless.

"No substantial changes to report," he told her. "I'm still working on completing my memory restoration."

"Any progress?"

He gave a remarkably human-like shrug. "Nothing to narrow-cast home about. I was hoping to discover that I'm the deposed ruler of M4-78, but so far, no such luck."

Barriss smiled. M4-78 was the legendary planet of droids, supposedly dating back from the Old Republic. I-Five's sense of humor—just the fact that a droid could have a sense of humor—still surprised her at times.

She gestured at the table. "Care to join us?"

"**A**nybody seen Kio lately?" Den asked the table at large. Normally they would be playing sabaac, but everybody was too tired to concentrate.

Tolk walked up in time to hear the question. "He's swamped," she said. "Got a lot of unhappy and distressed patients."

"Imagine that," Jos said, being careful not to slur his words. He'd followed the Blaster with a couple of Coruscant Coolers, and was fairly drunk but didn't want to let on how far down that road he was. He noticed Den looking at him. "What?" he asked, and was surprised at how querulous he sounded.

"Have you talked to him yet?"

"Who?"

"Who?" Den mimicked, not unkindly. "Merit. Kio Merit. Big guy. Equani, remember? Our resident Minder, the guy who patches up psyches like you patch up bodies?"

"Me?" Jos said. "No." He shook his head. "No." He noticed the expression on Tolk's face and knew what she wanted to say, because she had said it three or four times already: *Go see the empath. Let him help you with this. That's his job, that's what he does.*

But he didn't want help with it. True, it hurt but it should hurt. That's why he'd refused Barriss' offer to grant him balm through the Force as well. His friend was dead, and that wasn't something a man could or should just shrug off and leave behind.

It wasn't like his death even made much sense. Zan had died for a plant. The Republic clone army was here on Drongar fighting a war against the Separatist droid forces for one reason only: bota—a rare plant that could be turned into a panacean drug that was many things to many species. It could be used variously as an antibiotic, an antipyretic, a narcotic, or a soporific, depending on the life form being treated. The list was long, and it kept growing longer the more the Republic scientists experimented with various permutations of it. It seemed to have few, if any, side effects. It was truly a miracle drug; yet bota's cellular structure was so fragile that any vibration heavier than the treads on a harvester droid could kill it. That usually kept the warring factions from throwing anything that made too big a boom at each other—but not always.

Bota grew wild in the swamps of the southern continent of Tanlassa, and both the Republic and the Separatists wanted as much of it as they could get. It had no specific benefits for mechanicals, but Count Dooku's forces weren't all droids; there were plenty of biological beings who could use what the plant provided.

The ultimate irony was that its seemingly endless list of miracle cures was interdicted for use on Drongar. Jos and the other doctors were forbidden to use bota to help the very troops who fought to protect it; it was conserved for use in more important battles on other worlds. Zan had fought against this, had gone so far as to illegally treat various patients with a distillate of it. A pity that what had laid him low had been one of the few things the phenomenal plant couldn't cure.

Jos' reverie was interrupted by an all-too-familiar sound, rising in the distance. He looked up and saw that the others were hearing it as well. The drone penetrated the noisy cantina, a sound that everybody knew and everybody hated: medlifters.

"Showtime," Jos said as he finished his drink.

He headed out of the cantina, pulling on a filter mask as the sweltering air of the Drongaran midday wrapped around him like a rontu's tongue. Barriss and Tolk followed. He noticed Leemoth and a few other surgeons approaching from their kiosks. Everyone's path converged on the landing platform, which also served as the triage area. The first of the carriers was settling in, its repulsorlift beams kicking up dust and spores, and Jos could see already that it was going to be a bad one.

Colonel Vaetes grabbed Jos as he was gowning and gloving up. "Table six is yours," he said. "And you better hurry."

Jos didn't question his boss. After all, it didn't matter. Cut, glue, staple, stitch, one clone was the same as the next. It didn't mean anything, yea or nay—sewn one, sewn them all.

But when he reached the table and looked at the patient, he got a rush so cold it felt as if he'd been dipped in cryo.

Zan!

Then, as he drew nearer, he realized his mistake. Yes, the patient was a Zabrak male, but the tattoos were different, the horn growth not in the same pattern. It was an easy mistake to make, given his thoughts lately.

His rush of excitement plunged. Of course it wasn't Zan. He had seen Zan's body. Dead was forever.

Tolk was laying out instruments, and the circulating nurse was setting up tractor and pressor generators and sterile field lamps as he stepped up. "I didn't know we had any more Zabrams dirtside," he said.

"We don't," Tolk said. "He's a Separatist mercenary. Got shot down behind our lines."

He hadn't had occasion to work on any since Zan's death, however. A quick surge of anger washed over him. "Let somebody else do this one," he said.

Vaetes once again zeroed in on Jos. "No can do. You're the expert on Zabrak anatomy. Jos, MagnoRez scan shows a small-arms slug against his CNS sub-sternal plex, a fragment of another in his twelfth circumcollar nerve, and a few other bits of metal here and there. We've got him on Imobilin."

"Great," Jos said, remembering his days working as a surgical resident at Big Zoo. He'd had a run on Zabrak patients, after a visiting contingent's transport had crashed. He'd assisted on more than forty surgeries in five days. "It'll be tricky. We jiggle the plex even a little, he goes into systemic shock and dies. Distress CC-12, he lives, but he's meat from the neck down." That was why they were running Imobilin, a paralytic, through him; any movements, however small, could be disastrous.

As he spoke, Jos heard the sound of another medflier doppling in. "Then best you get started," Vaetes said in reply. "We'll be needing the table. Soon."

"Colonel—" Jos began.

"I know. He's an enemy combatant and you aren't too fond of them right now. But he's also a high-ranking officer, and RI wants him alive and talking."

"Republic Intelligence—an oxymoron if ever there was one—is not my worry."

"No, but surgery is. He's your patient—take care of him, Doctor Vondar."

Maker's eyes, Jos thought. He stepped into the sterile field, blinking as the antipathogen lights strobed over him. "Scan?"

Tolk nodded at the circulating nurse, who held up the flatscreen with the image of the wounded Zabrak's anatomy on it.

Those drinks were coming back to haunt Jos. It was too late now for a shot of anti-hangover juice. Even sober, relaxed, and rested this sort of thing was tricky neurosurgery, and he was half drunk, tense, and exhausted. He wouldn't bet a declared against title to a luxury star cruiser on this guy's chances of surviving.

"A human?" came a deep and guttural voice. "They couldn't find a real doctor?"

The Zabrak was apparently still awake.

"Who's doing anesthesia?" Jos asked. "Why is this patient talking?" "Haven't even started slicing me and already you've fouled up, eh, human? Big surprise, that one."

Jos ground enamel. "Somebody put this patient to sleep, please. Now." "What's the matter?" the Zabrak asked. "Don't have the nodes to kill me while I look you in the eye?"

Jos glared at the wounded patient. "You think it's a bright idea to piss off the surgeon who's about to carve you open like a Feast Day trikaloo?"

The Zabrak sneered. A lot of people might not have recognized the expression, but Jos had lived with Zan for months, and he knew. "Go ahead and cut something fatal, human. You'll be doing me a favor. If I make it, your brain-benders will squeeze me like a sea sponge for what I know. Quick death or slow torture—which would you choose?"

"We don't torture prisoners."

The Zabrak laughed. It hurt him to do so, Jos could tell. Good, he thought, and was surprised at the fierce pleasure he felt.

"Don't get out much, do you?" the Zabrak asked.

Jos concentrated on his breathing. Don't let him get to you.

"What is your name, Zabrak?"

"What do you care, human?"

"Just curious. After all, I'm going to be cutting you open in a few minutes. I'm Doctor Jos Vondar, by the way."

"Planning to read my epitaph?"

Jos couldn't help it. "Maybe, if I'm lucky."

The Zabrak managed another laugh, again at some cost. "Sar Omant," he said. "Actually, that's Colonel Sar Omant, of the Freelance Mercenary Corps. At your service—unfortunately."

The anesthetist showed up at last and slapped a dermpatch on Colonel Omant's neck. "Sorry, Doctor Vondar," she said. "I had to find enough sodium phyleol for his weight."

Jos nodded. Of course. A Zabrak's physiology required a special anesthetic. Wouldn't be a lot of it lying around.

The Zabrak's eyes started to roll back, showing the whites. Before he lost consciousness, he managed a few more words: "Iaz noy j'itai...."

Tolk asked. "What was that? A prayer?"

Jos gritted his teeth again. "No. A curse."

Going in, Jos realized that he was going to have to do the surgery in two parts. The CC-12 was the easier of the two procedures, insofar that it would only take an hour at most to pull it off. The sub-sternal plex could wait—it wouldn't kill the Zabrak as long as he was immobilized. Jos could dig the first fragment out, and, if he didn't further damage the circumcollar nerve, the patient would be able to walk—assuming he didn't die during the second procedure.

It would be so easy to mess it up. Even the best blademaker at Coruscant Medical might not be able to remove a thumb-tip-sized projectile from an area as sensitive as a Zabrak's plex without putting the patient into systemic shock. Nobody would be able to point a finger at Jos if Sar Omant didn't make it. Just give it a little jerk when you pull it out, twitch it just a hair....



Or he could insult the CC-12 a little and paralyze the bastard. Save his life but leave him a quad—it was tempting, very tempting. After all, Zan was dead because of killers like this one. Omant would have plenty of time to think about his actions that way. And at least there would be some justice.

"Number eighteen vibroblade, please."

She slapped the scalpel's handle into his gloved hand. As she did so, the lights blinked off and then back on.

"What?" Jos said, as he pulled his hand away from the patient's horned breastplate.

"It's the generator," somebody said. "Spore-rot eating the harmonic plates, probably."

Is anyone really surprised? Jos wondered. They'd had to get the OT and environs up and running before all the generators were in place, and consequently everything was constantly on the verge of overload. Including the personnel—especially the personnel.

The anesthetist said to him, "We're getting some tamponade in the secondary pericardium, doctor. MEG shows a fluid build-up in the sub heart."

Blast! Jos thought. "We'll have to drain that before we pull the slug." Zabraks had two hearts, a primary and a secondary, and if one began beating out of sync with the other, the arrhythmia could cause both to begin fibrillating. And that would most likely kill Omant before the plex shock got a chance to.

"Crack open a cardiac tray," Jos said. As Tolk turned to get one, he looked around the large room. All the operating tables were full. He could see droid orderlies, including I-Five, pushing more gurneys past the OT's clear denscrist doors in the hall. And even as he realized with a sinking heart how far behind they were dropping, he heard the rising whine of more medlifters approaching.

This was taking far too long. How many of the clones would die while he was working on this enemy soldier?

Den Dhur had remained in the cantina after the others had left. Mama Dhur hadn't raised no crazy younglings, and crazy was what you had to be to go out into the blazing miasmic afternoon sun if you didn't have to. So Den's plan for the rest of the day was a simple one—he would do his best to single-throatedly keep the cantina in business.

The whir of a servodriver near the rear of the building made him glance around. A construction droid was putting the finishing touches on one of the rear panels. The OT was up and running. Den knew, plus whatever support infrastructure it needed—and the cantina, of course. But the rest of the base was only now, after nearly a week, coming online. He was grateful that the cantina had been the next to be erected, after the Rimsoo buildings. Someone had their priorities straight.

Even so, however, Den—and others he'd talked to—still felt a definite sense of hanging fire. As if they were all waiting for someone or something to give them the go-ahead with the rest of their lives, or at least the rest of their tours on Drongar. There was a musical term Zan had used a lot—Den frowned, searching for the word. *Intermezzo*. A short and simple piece, bridging two separate works. Though often disparaged as little more than "lift-tube music," it could sometimes be, according to the Zabrak composer, extremely important. "Like connective tissue," he'd told Den. "It holds everything else in place."

He looked about at the rest of the patrons. There were seven or eight other beings who were mostly human, but not all. The Bothan who'd crowded ahead of him earlier was still here, staring broodingly into his mug. Closer to the entrance an Ishi Tib seemed to be flirting with an Ugnaught. Den shuddered slightly. *Yar, bloodline, there's a match be made on Planet Hell*. He looked hastily someplace else, and spotted a Durosian medtech just entering. Something about her made Den's story sense tingle. He picked up his drink and went to join her at the bar.

He gestured to the tender. "Whatever she wants." The medtech nodded her gratitude, and Den waved it away. "Just tell me something of interest. I've got this insatiable beast called the HoloNet News Service to appease."

"Not much to tell," the Durosian said. "Busy. Tables full, halls full, stacking 'em up outside."

"Old news, darlin'. Give me something juicy I can twirl a story out of."

"Well, there is one thing. Vondar is cutting on an enemy mercenary."

Den's ears swiveled forward. "Yeah?"

The Durosian lowered her voice. "And I don't think anybody's told him that his patient is the same guy who led the charge on our last camp—the one that killed Doctor Yant."

Den blinked. "Milk me with a turbo-laser. Hey, tell Big Nose your next three drinks are on me." He got up and moved back to his own table, turning this datum over and looking at it from all sides.

It was gossip, not news—but it was a pretty amazing piece of gossip. He wouldn't want to be the patient under Doc Vondar's vibro-blade when Jos found out he was operating on the very being responsible for the death of Zan Yant. The Seppie stood a better chance shaving a Wookiee, blindfolded and with a dull blade.

Barriss wiped sweat from her face. Her robe was of an osmotic material, with a weave that allowed air circulation better than most clothing. It could be wrapped tighter for warmth in the winter, looser for more coolness in the summer, but when the temperature in the shade was hotter than a human's body, even being naked wasn't going to stop you from perspiring. You just had to put up with it.

As she walked through the medical ward, checking on various patients, she felt a disturbance in the Force. This in itself was hardly unusual—in a room full of wounded and dying people, the swirls of energy were often erratic and labile. Impending death and chronic pain tended to heighten emotions, and such feelings marked the Force with their creation and passage.

But this was different. It was hard to pin down, but it seemed to be more familiar than some of the roiling sensations coming from the ward. When she focused on it, Barriss realized it was emanating from somebody whom she knew better than the transient patients. She narrowed her focus yet more, and suddenly she knew who it was.

Jos Vondar.

Again, this wasn't unusual, not since Zan Yant's passing. One would think that doctors would be more inured to death than most but that was, in her experience, seldom the case. They fought against the final darkness daily—sometimes winning, sometimes losing—but when it came to friends or relatives, doctors were like everyone else. Knowing the enemy was not the same as embracing him.

Barriss frowned. Even so, something was odd here. This wasn't grief that she felt from Jos, who was only a short walk away, laboring in surgery. No, this was something else. Anger? Disgust? Something in between?

Whatever it was, he needed help. She could feel it.

Barriss moved toward the OT. Things were relatively quiet for the moment; she could take a few minutes to suss out what was causing the ripple she could still feel.

"How's it coming?" Vaates asked.

"No big surprises so far," Jos replied. Talk mopped his forehead. Behind him, the Zabrak slept peacefully, his facial and body tattoos gleaming under the halogen lights. "I've removed the projectile shard from the CC nerve, and it looks like impulse-conduction is still working peripherally, or at least grossly. He'll be able to pull a trigger just fine again, if he makes it. But it's going to take a while to get the plex surgery done."

"Can you stabilize him?"

Jos blinked away a drop of sweat Talk had missed that had rolled into his left eye. "Maybe. Why?"

"We have sixteen wounded who need surgery, and a couple who can't wait. If you can ice this patient and get back to him, we could use your help."

Jos shrugged. "Cryo's always a risk. I thought this guy was a big deal."

"He is, but I'm not willing to let others die in his place. Stabilize him, Jos. We need you."

Jos nodded. The colonel moved away, getting quick status reports from other tables. Jos turned to the anesthetist and said, "Put him into cryo-cycle stasis and stack him somewhere."

"How long?"

"I don't know. The max. Four hours." If, after that long, Jos wasn't finished with his other patients, Colonel Omant might get freezer burn—four hours was as long as a sentient was apt to stay stable in this setting.

As Jos was re-gloving and gowning, one of the field medics passed by in the hall, pushing another gurney. He paused in the doorway. "Hey, Doc, how'd the Zabrak scum do? Died in great pain, I hope?"

"He's in cryo-stasis," Jos said.

The medic, a Twi'Lek, shook his head, his lekku swinging with the motion. "You're a bigger man than I am, Doc. Seppie killed my friend. I guarantee my hand wouldn't be all that steady with a blade."

Jos frowned. "What are you talking about?"

"You don't know? The Zabrak was head of the mercenary unit that led the charge on our Rimsoo. Commander of the strike force of bios and droids that was first to hit us."

The medic moved on, leaving Jos standing there in the hall, feeling like he'd just been jabbed with a full-strength force-pike. Then rage rolled up in him, black and fierce. His hand tore through the glove he was putting on.

Commander of the strike force of bios and droids that was first to hit us....

The Sithspawn on the table whose life he'd been trying to save had been directly responsible for Zan's death!

Barriss had no trouble finding Jos Vondar. The rage that boiled in him was a splotch of darkness in the operating theater; she could feel it, almost touch it.

As she approached, she saw Talk emerge from the "fresher, pulling on a clean surgical top. She moved to intercept her.

"Talk. How's Jos doing?"

"Not so good," the nurse replied grimly. "But I guess you probably know that. He just spent two hours working on a Zabrak prisoner with some tricky conditions."

"I can see where working on a Zabrak—particularly an enemy Zabrak—might be difficult for him right now, but I'm feeling some serious rage coming from him. That can't be all of it."

"It's not. We just found out the Zabrak is the head of the mercenary unit that attacked us last week."

"I see," Barriss said. "What's the status of the patient now?"

"D'Arc ordered him iced until we can clear the backlog. As soon as things settle down, Jos is supposed to go back and finish patching him up."

Barriss nodded. "Prognosis?"

"Thirty, maybe forty percent chance of survival—with a specialist in Zabrak neurosurgery. The slightest slipup at the wrong time could kill him. Jos is no expert—plus he's exhausted and not fully sober. And in another two hours he's supposed to go back in and try to save the man who's responsible for his best friend's death."

Barriss shook her head in disbelief. "Under such circumstances, if the patient dies, nobody would blame Jos."

"Of course not. But I know him, Barriss. Even if he tries his best, if Omant dies, sooner or later Jos will look in the mirror and wonder if he did it on purpose. I don't think he'd be able to live with that. It would eat him up."

Barriss didn't say anything. This was a truly nasty situation; in fact, she couldn't think of a way it could be any worse.

"Can you help him?" Talk asked.

She sighed. "I can try."

The medlifters finally stopped coming. Elbows-deep in a clone full of grenade fragments, Jos heard somebody say that the battle that produced the huge influx of wounded was finally over. The word was that the Separatists had lost half as many battledroids as the Republic had clones but that wasn't much consolation.

Jos looked around, spotted a circulating surgical tech, and beckoned him over. "Somebody better thaw Omant out," he told the tech, a female Ugnaut. "He's been cooling for almost the limit."

"Y'gonna have t' wake 'im up when he gets warm, y'know."

She was right. Zabraks had a weird resistance to anesthesia—only a few kinds worked well on them, and the natural hardness of the species was such that they quickly developed resistance to those.

"Fine, wake him up—but keep the paralytic running."

"Y'got it, Doc."

Talk started gluestatting and stapling the last patient shut. Jos gestured at the circulating tech for new gloves and a gown. He wasn't looking forward to this.

Or was he? That was the big question, wasn't it?

Barriss had finished her shift in the medical ward, and she went straight from there to the surgical theater. As a healer and a Jedi, she had abilities other doctors didn't; she could use the Force to soothe and repair injuries not easily treated with a drug or a blade. But there were limits. One of those limits lay in treating somebody against their will, or

without their knowledge. It was one thing to go into the mind of a patient in a coma; another thing to adjust the thoughts of somebody who was awake and functioning. Yes, Jedi used the Force to sway weak minds, when the only other choice was to allow those beings to do grievous harm to themselves or others. But entering the strong mind of a surgeon working to save a dying patient was an entirely different situation.

Assuming that Jos is trying to save the Zabrak, and not kill him.

Reading that kind of intent was sometimes difficult. With all of the emotion rolling around in Jos' head, Barriss knew she could easily mistake his intent regarding Omant. He undoubtedly had mixed feelings, was seriously conflicted about it. And how you felt about a thing was not always how you acted upon it.

The halls were clearing out, and there weren't any wounded lined up outside the main OT when she got there. Barriss looked into the theater. The surgeons, surgical droids, nurses, techs, and orderlies bustled about, tending to the injured. She saw Jos as he stepped up to a new patient, and the Force told her it was yet another clone trooper, and not the Zabrak officer.

Which was just as well. There was another aspect to all this that she had to consider. If she brought the Force to bear on Jos while he was in the middle of a delicate procedure, she might very well cause him to make a mistake. His was not a weak mind, and any conflict between his brain and hers could translate to neural misfiring, and in turn to a tremulous hand wielding the blade.

Tricky. Very tricky. She wished she could talk to her Master, to get her advice. But that wasn't going to happen, either.

Jos stripped off his gloves. He was hardly able to manage that, he was so tired.

The fem Ugnaut tech cycled around. "Zabrak's awake, Doc. Got a mouth on 'im, dat one does."

Jos nodded wearily. "Where is he?"

"Pre-op."

Sar Omant was lying under a thin sheet of repelfab, tracking Jos with his eyes as he was unable to turn his head. Nobody else was around. The monitoring casters stuck to the patient fed their data to a nursing station, and presumably somebody there was keeping track of the vital signs.

"Ah, Doctor Smoothskin," Omant greeted him with. "Why am I still alive?"

"That's a good question. I'm looking for an answer."

"Don't trouble yourself on my account."

"We fixed a heart problem, took a slug fragment out of your spinal cord, and we're getting ready to pull another slug out of your substernal plex."

"Like I said, human, don't bother. Better dead than bled from the head."

Jos said, "My best friend on this backrocket planet was a Zabrak surgeon."

"Goes to show you how tolerant of lesser species we Zabraks are, doesn't it?"



"His name was Zan Yant."

Even though Omant's facial muscles weren't working very well, Jos thought he saw a surprised expression flit across the other's features.

"You know the name." It was not a question.

"Talusian, right? Music composer, plays the queterra," Omant said.

"Not a classical fan myself, but he's pretty well-known on the homeworld. What about him?"

"He's dead," Jos said tonelessly. "You killed him."

Omant was watching him closely now. "Not impossible," he said. "I kill a lot of people. I don't remember dusting one of my own kind recently. Hey, you get busy, you miss things, right?"

Jos wanted to pick up something heavy and smash Sar Omant's horned head to a bloody mush. He wanted to hit him over and over again.

"It doesn't bother you?" he asked. "To kill a being of your own species?"

"It doesn't bother me to kill a being of any species, smoothie. It's what I do. It's why we're all on this hot mudball, isn't it? It's a war—haven't you noticed?"

They were alone in the chamber at the moment. Jos knew that all he had to do was put his hand on Sar Omant's shoulder, as if making a friendly, companionable gesture, and shake him. Not hard. A brief jerk or two would be all that was needed. He knew this. And he knew that Omant knew it too.

He reached out, put his hand lightly on the Zabrak's shoulder. For a long moment, both were very still. Then Jos said, "Rest up. You'll need it."

He turned and stalked out of the OT.

Jos headed for the "fresher, his surgical scrubs soaked with sweat. As he stepped in, he nearly ran into Kio Merit. The big Equani Minder was drying his hands under a blower. He looked up

and smiled. The Equani was, as Zan had once described him, as big as a Wampa with a thyroid problem. His eyes were large and stereoscopic, and his mouth wide and filled with two rows of teeth. Equani were definitely predators, and Jos imagined they probably looked pretty fearsome to anyone coming upon one for the first time. Knowing as he did the gentle soul beneath the fearsome exterior, however, Jos found it hard to think of Merit as anything but a benign professional therapist.

He raised a hand in greeting. "Kio."

"Jos. How are you doing?"

"Me? Oh, fine. Relaxed, enjoying another beautiful day on scenic Drongar, fun capital of the galaxy. How's about you?"

"I just came from post-op."

Jos nodded. The Minder would have been busy, calming the spirits of those who were gravely wounded or dying. Jos didn't envy him that job. He started to strip off his sodden clothes.

Merit asked, "You done for the day?"

"Got one more surgery." Jos activated the unit. "They're prepping him now." He started disrobing, then stopped and looked at the Minder.

"You ever have to work on patients you don't like?" he asked. "Heal somebody who grates on you, someone you actively hate?"

"Now and then, yes."

"How do you handle it?"

Merit shrugged, the short fur on his shoulders and back rippling with the movement. "We all have to do things we don't enjoy. We all find ourselves in situations where our actions aren't those we'd prefer. But when you sign on to do a job, you don't always get to choose—it's the nature of the work. When you can't live with a choice, you walk away."

"What if you can't walk away?"

Merit leaned against the plasteel wall. "Care to get more specific?"

Jos stood staring into the shower. He watched the water pool on the floor and spiral down the drain. "My patient is responsible for the attack that killed Zan. He has no regrets about it; he's a mercenary. He's also

an obnoxious milking mopak I wouldn't cross the street to spit on if he was on fire—and I'm the only guy here qualified to save his life. And at best, the odds are against him, even if I don't make a mistake."

Merit didn't speak for a moment. "That's a hard one."

Jos laughed, and the sound danced on the edge of hysteria. "Got to hand it to you Minders, you don't miss a thing."

Merit sighed. "Nobody around here has all the answers, Jos, not even our neighborhood Jedi. You want to punish this patient for what he did. You'd like to see him suffer and die."

"Oh, yeah," Jos hesitated, then added, "Just after Zan died, while we were still on the transport, I swore to myself that I would do something that would change things, somehow. I was concussed and barely conscious, couldn't even stand up, but I remember deciding that I had to avenge Zan, to make his death not quite so meaningless."

"And now a golden opportunity has presented itself. The supreme irony—the very being who was directly responsible for Zan's death turns up under your knife. 'What are the odds? How can it be anything else but fate?' you ask yourself."

"Yes."

Merit nodded. "Understandable. But now ask yourself this: if you'd died in that attack and it was Zan about to operate on the being responsible, what do you think he would do?"

Jos shook his head. "I don't know."

"I think you do. If you're looking for justice, Jos, finding it in a war is never going to be easy. People do things that are horrible and despicable. But if they survive, when the war is over, they have to look back on those actions and figure out a way to rationalize what they did. Ask yourself this: ten years from now, while you're in practice on your home world treating civilian patients, then going home to see your spouse and children, how will you feel about the choice you made with this patient? If your son or daughter asks you what you did in the war, what will you tell them?"

Cleaner and slightly refreshed from his shower, Jos stood waiting as a droid orderly gurneyed the patient in and transferred him to the table. Activity had died down, there were only a couple of surgeons still slicing, but Jos was aware that those who weren't working were watching him, Barriss Offee stood a few meters away, masked and gowned, also watching.

The Zabrak was still awake. They wouldn't knock him out until the last moment, to keep him from staying under any longer than necessary. He gave Jos a baleful glare.

"Doctor Smoothskin. Long time no see. Any messages you want me to deliver to your friend when I get to the other side?"

Jos ignored him. He turned to the anesthetist. "Knock him out," he said.

Sar Omant was laughing when the anesthetic took him down. Vaetes drifted over. "Listen, Jos. If this guy doesn't make it, nobody will blame you. Not that I'm saying you should—"

Jos nodded. "I know what you mean, D'Arc. Thanks."

"Just do your best," Vaetes moved off.

"Doctor," the anesthetist said, "he's going into Rhees-Verk."

"Back off on the efftol drip a quarter, start an infusion of neurodan, five milligrams." Rhees-Verk breathing, a kind of sycopated rhythm, often led to ventricular fibrillation.

After a moment, the anesthetist said, "Still laboring."

Blast, Jos thought. "Let's get him on cardiorespiratory, stat—"

"Wait, hold on. He's stabilizing." The anesthetist's voice was astonished. "I don't know how or why, but he's steady again."

"Let's not stop to wonder why," Jos said. "Stations, everyone. We're going in."

Barriss Offee, wrapped in the Force, was working hard to keep the injured Zabrak's breathing regulated. It took all her concentration, and if she slacked off, she knew his primary heart would start to vibrate so fast it wouldn't be able to pump blood—and the Zabrak would most likely crash before the sub-heart could take over. She could hold him stable, this she knew, but she couldn't spare any energy for Jos. Whatever decision he was going to make about the patient, however he was going to deal with his personal demons, he was going to have to do it without any help from the Force.

"Number eighteen vibroblade," Jos said. Tolk slapped the handle into his palm. "Eighteen vibroblade."

"Making the incision—okay. Retract and get a pressor on it."

Jos paused, looking down at the patient. A small area just below the sternum was being held open by pressor fields, exposing the rosy strata of the plex. Within its folds he could glimpse the dull gray of the slug lodged there.

He looked at Sar Omant's face. Even unconscious, the Zabrak's expression was hard, unforgiving. The face of a killer.

What would Zan want, a kind and gentle being who had been a doctor, a musician, and a good friend, do if it were him cutting?

What was the best way for Jos to serve his friend's memory? What was the best way for him to serve his own future? What was the only way to help, however infinitesimally, begin the healing process that must eventually encompass the galaxy?

He remembered then, for some reason, listening to a piece Zan had been playing a couple of months earlier, in their kiosk. Short, and consisting mostly of one or two single, quavering notes. An intermezzo, he'd called it. A moment between movements, a held breath, a pause before plunging back into the music that was life. "What happens in these moments, these interstitial beats," he'd told Jos, "are as important as the main pieces themselves. Because it's in those moments between where we gain clarity. Where we suddenly know what the next movement is really all about."

"Forceps," he murmured to Tolk. She handed them to him, and he could see that she was smiling under her mask.

As was he. ☺



Have Fun Building Your Own Lightsaber

PLUS SPECIAL EDITION VADER, MAQUETTES, AND 3D MOVIE POSTERS

Now that the first few waves of *Revenge of the Sith* figures and playsets have hit store shelves, Hasbro is prepped to release one of the coolest lightsaber kits ever as well as an exciting new 3¾-inch figure based on everyone's favorite baddie, Darth Vader. And for those of you who are into the more high-end collectibles, you're going to want to take a peek at the latest *Clone Wars* maquettes from Gentle Giant Studios as well as the cool 3D posters from Code 3 Collectibles.

AN ELEGANT WEAPON FOR A MORE CIVILIZED AGE

Ever since *Star Wars* was released, fans have been completely enamored with lightsabers. Over the years, Hasbro, and Kenner before it, have created a variety of cool toys based on the Jedi weapon of choice, with the most recent versions including extendable, telescoping blades, and trademark sound effects. Now Hasbro has gone a step further with the *Star Wars* Ultimate Lightsaber kit, making it possible to create your own weapon without having to first complete the required training.

Within minutes it's easy to assemble and customize a lightsaber that fits your Force affinity, whether that's to fight as a heroic Jedi Knight, or to succumb to the dark side and join the evil Sith. Each kit comes with everything a budding Padawan needs to get started—more than 14 pieces—including a hilt, hilt sleeves, blades, emitters, and Force crystals, each of which produces unique activation and deactivation sounds. With all the available parts it's possible to construct hundreds of different lightsaber configurations.



Insider's editor-in-chief shows off his favorite lightsaber creations.



CELEBRATING HASBRO'S 500TH FIGURE THE VADER WAY

This year marks a very special moment in *Star Wars* history as Hasbro introduces the 500th figure in its legendary 3 3/4-inch action figure collection. And with 2005 being the year of *Revenge of the Sith*, it's only right that the ultimate villain of all time, Darth Vader, receives the honor to mark this significant event.

Designed with incredible detail and superior articulation, the Dark Lord of the Sith comes seated in his menacing meditation chamber, which was made famous in Episode V: *The Empire Strikes Back*. By manipulating a lever positioned on the back of the chamber, it's possible to raise and lower the top portion of Vader's helmet onto his scarred head. The only things missing are a handful of unconscious admirals lying at his feet.



INTRODUCING CLONE WARS MAQUETTES, SERIES 2

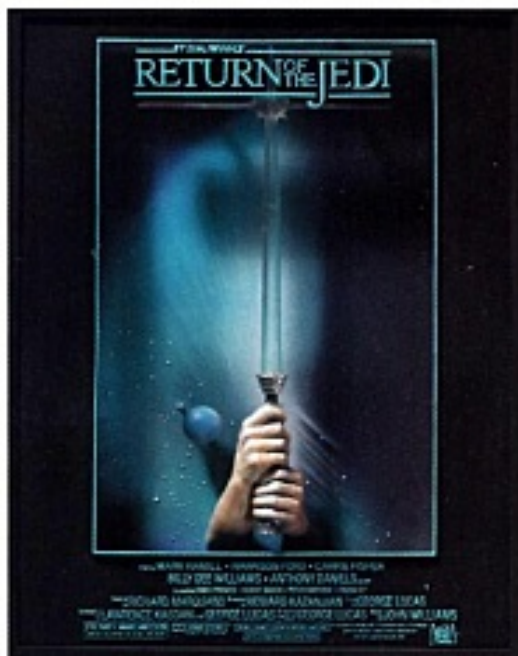
Absolutely some of the hottest items to hit the collecting circuit in the past year have been Gentle Giant's Clone Wars animated maquettes. The first series, which featured five outstanding sculpts of Obi-Wan Kenobi, Yoda, Ahsoka Tano, Padmé, and an ARC trooper, sold out quickly. For the second series, fans can look forward to three additional sculpts.

First up is the imposing figure of Separatist leader General Grievous. This highly detailed maquette stands 10-inches tall and comes with a green-bladed lightsaber, which he obviously retrieved from one of his fallen combatants. Next is a wonderfully detailed figure of Jedi Knight Anakin Skywalker. This maquette of the Republic's greatest hero stands 8-inches high and he sports his season two haircut and scar near his right eye as well as a flowing black cape and blue-bladed lightsaber. To round out the collection is a deluxe maquette featuring Jedi Knights Barriss Offee and Luminara Unduli (not pictured) as they prepare for battle. Be sure to visit gentlegiantllc.com to check when each of these great collectibles will be available.

FAMOUS STAR WARS POSTERS RENDERED IN 3D

In a move to break from the norm, Code 3 is hitting the market with some truly unique collectibles in its new line of Legendary Cast 3D posters. For the series, collectors can expect to see highly detailed versions of four one-sheets modeled after popular original trilogy posters, including Style A versions for *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi* as well as a Style D reproduction of the 1978 re-release poster for *A New Hope*.

For those who enjoy scale replicas of popular *Star Wars* vehicles, Code 3 is still offering high-end, fully detailed die-cast metal versions of the Republic Gunship from *Attack of the Clones* and the AT-ST from *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Each vehicle has been expertly crafted and come with moveable parts, a display platform, and certificate of authenticity. For more information on these and other products, visit code3.net. —Brett Rector



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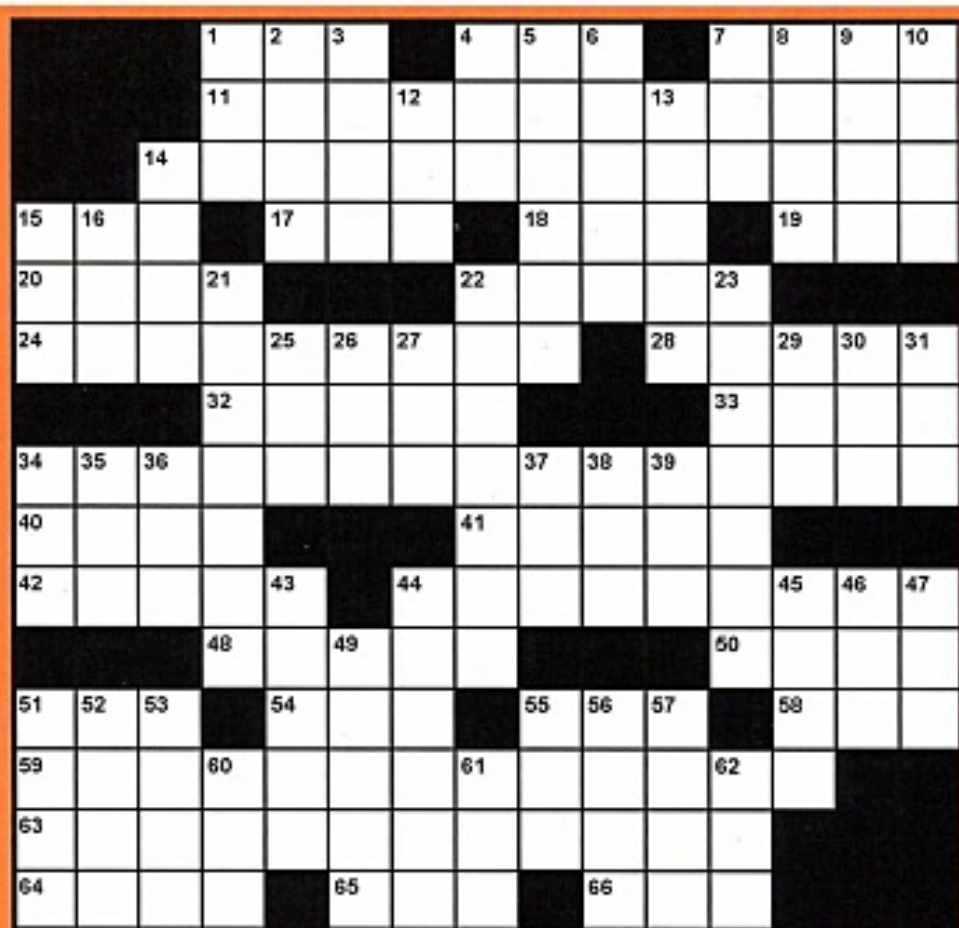


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STILL MORE SONGS FROM



THE MOS EISLEY CANTINA



By Mike Sellinger

ACROSS

- 1 Site in the hot springs of Sullust
4 ... is la
7 1 of 2 Coreys in *The Last Boys*
11/14 Yoda reinterprets a Pink lyric?
15 The ... of *Star Wars* (John Porter philosophy book)
17 Worm ...
18 Something to play *Galaxies* on
19 ... Jonga
20 Hawaiian isle
22 ... Zan Arbor (scientist foe of Qui-Gon in *The Evil Experiment*)
24/25 Yoda warbles a Stevie Wonder ballad?
28 Old Ford
32 Brought to the scene
33 Bit of electricity
34 Yoda covers a Montell Jordan R&B hit?
40 *Star Trek* counselor
41 Grands
42 Read the riot act
44/50 Yoda rewrites a Clash smash?
48 Beck's big song
50 Like an original Luke action figure
51 Item made from a LEGO C-3PO
54 Portman nickname
55 Sauce for a French dip
58 Rogue 3 Narawa ... (X-Wing: Rogue Squadron)

- 64 They power a TIE fighter
65 *Essential Guide to Alien Species* author ... Margaret Lewis
66 "The Jedi ... all but extinct" (Ben)

DOWN

- 1 Clone trooper rank, for short
2 Fruit from a tree
3 Razor brand
4 Word in all *Star Wars* movie titles but *A New Hope*
5 Alien director Scott
6 Dam in Egypt
7 Bad actor
8 Type of lily
9 "That's no moon! ... space station!" (Kenobi)
10 *Star Wars: The New ...* (Kuy & Harrison book)
12 Acronym for Tolkien's second of the trilogy
13 Presto type
14 Ewoks' ... Tree
15 Film network, in TV listings
16 Roadside help org.
21 Feeling between the Senate and Trade Federation in Episode I
22 Ewan McGregor's job in *A Life Less Ordinary*
23 Rune Haako, to Nute Gunray
25 Letter in a droid's name
26 Baffling
27 Naboo Governor ... Bibble
29 Cry for help
30 Marikthal of *The Iron Giant*
31 Alliance officers, for short
34 Shaker ... OH
35 LoR baddie
36 Go after, like Anakin to Padmé
37 Except, briefly
38 Sci-fi novel co.
39 Crush with love
43 Person who's given something
44 Boards
45 Han served in the Imperial one
46 It's mined on the planet Dorvalla
47 Number of years between Episodes I and II
49 Videogame *Dragon Ball Z: Assault of the ...-ins*
51 Abbr. for a sequel
52 Ex-NBA guard Craig
53 Tube in some lightsaber models
55 Dr. ... Eicroth (Tyrant's Test archaeologist)
56 Aggy, that gives dietary advice
57 Mix up
60 Trailers, for short
61 Carrie Fisher role in *Jay & Silent Bob Strike Back*
62 Fruit juice



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Revenge of the Sith: A Musical Journey

THE CONCLUSION

In the last issue of *insider*, we brought you details as Composer John Williams and the London Symphony Orchestra began their work on Episode III's soundtrack. We now take a peek into the final days of recording as Williams and company wrap up their work on the last chapter in a saga that took 28 years to complete.

RECORDING "REVENGE"

With each *Star Wars* film, composer John Williams has selected a particular composition to stand apart. It's removed from the context of the film, and generally has its start or end reworked so that it becomes a stand-alone musical piece. In the past, these have become singles on the soundtrack, concert suites, or music videos. Examples include "Main Title," "Darth Vader's Theme (Imperial March)," "The Forest Battle," "Duel of the Fates," and "Across the Stars."

For Episode III, a dramatic cue from the sixth reel gets that treatment. Called *Revenge of the Sith*—or less colorfully, 6M9—it appears in the film during the thick of the duel between Obi-Wan and Anakin Skywalker. The first half of the second day of scoring sessions consists of capturing this piece for both inclusion in the film and as a modified version for the soundtrack release.



Abbey Road

STAR WARS: J. R. ROBERTSON



In the end, it will include moments of heavy percussion as well as the emotional sweep provided by a choir. These elements will be layered in later. The music carries a memorable nine-note sentence that is a new theme that carries throughout the duel between Anakin and Obi-Wan.

As with most of the combat and action music, the timing and tempo are carefully controlled by the click track piped into the musician's earpieces. "We have clicks that will help things vertically," says Williams, "but it doesn't always help pitch because we don't hear ourselves so well."

"I can't wait to hear the chorus," says George Lucas. "It has a tendency to smooth things out..."

We made it through the first three Star Wars without click tracks, but we really need to use those clicks in this.

At moments in the music, the Force theme emerges to accompany instances of dialogue between Obi-Wan and his fallen student. The duel's most shocking event is built up by a crescendo of drums that suddenly cut out, leaving enough room for the audience to gasp. Sure enough, when the principal musicians crowd into the control room to listen to a take, and they see the video that's been playing behind them for the first time, they do gasp at the right part.

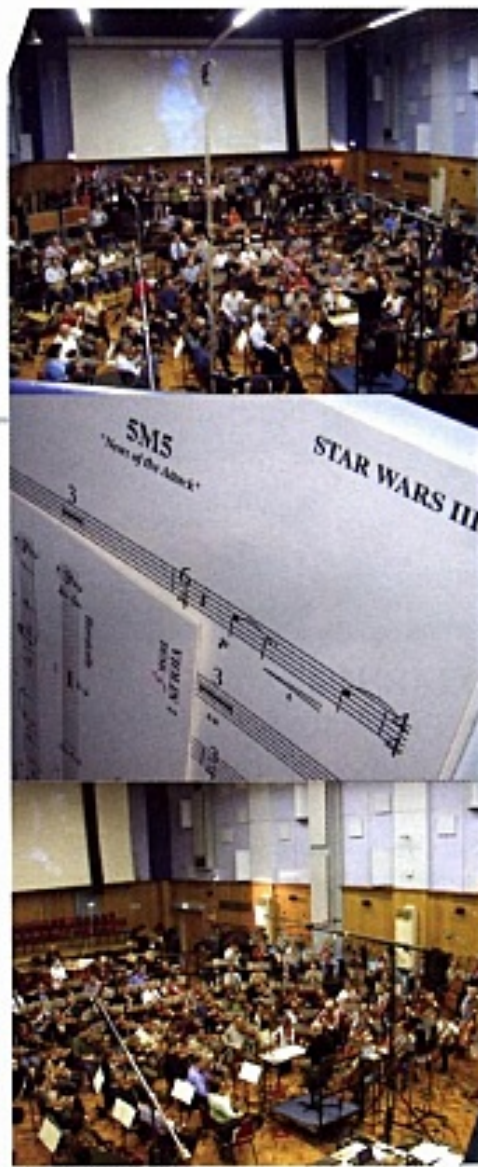
"It has energy. It has sound. If we can get more beauty to it," says Williams. "It's hard to do, because it needs to be big and energetic. It's a tough trade off."

"I can't wait to hear the chorus," says George Lucas. "It has a tendency to smooth things out and add a lot of emotion."

"Even though it's large and somewhat military in its sound, find a way to add some nobility to it," Williams advises the orchestra before another take. "Timpani and bass drums, rather than have it play angrily, do something that has a noble feel."

Other pieces scored this day included "Good-Bye Old Friend," which starts by covering the departure of Obi-Wan from his assault ship as he says farewell to his loyal clone officer, Commander Cody. The sound is full, heavy, and militaristic. At first listen, it's reminiscent of the opening refrains of "Belly of the Beast" from the Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade soundtrack. A stirring and proud rendition of the Force theme plays as Obi-Wan docks his starfighter to the six-engine hyperspace transport ring and blasts off on an important mission.

The opening of the piece is revisited later in the day as Lucas has requested a change. He



felt that a small moment of horns heard during the clone briefing was too light, too happy for the scene. Williams later recorded the pertinent measures sans that flourish.

What's truly amazing, watching the London Symphony Orchestra, is realizing that this is their first time seeing this music. There's no extended rehearsal to grow familiar with it. They play it through once, and then start recording. That first play-through is not accompanied by video, leaving everyone to imagine just what events might be transpiring in the film.

For instance, there's a part of "Good-Bye Old Friend" that turns dark and surreal. The harp plucks away and there's the hiss of a cymbal. The violins hold a chilling chord, accompanied by an ominous rumble from the bass drums. There's an interesting rattle of percussion, signaling danger, like a serpent coiled, ready to strike.

However, this isn't a scene of terror, but rather, a scene of Padmé and Anakin, discussing

things in her apartment. Without scoring, it could have played as an innocuous domestic scene. But with this music, it's so obvious that there's something terribly wrong with this picture, and the orchestra is foretelling the young lovers' fates.

Though we're trying to steer clear of some of the material that appears in the 7th reel, there was one piece that really stood out this day. "David said he's been waiting 25 years to play that," says Williams of one of the horn players.

With gentle harp accompaniment, we will hear graceful and beautiful quotations from "Princess Leia's Theme" in Episode III.

FINALE

There's no lengthy rehearsal. Upon turning to a new cue, the orchestra plays it once, without a click track, without video playback. Composer John Williams and Scoring Engineer Shawn Murphy listen for trouble spots. Williams revisits any troublesome measures with words of guidance

STAR WARS EPISODE III Music Breakdown Book II

or necessary modifications—oftentimes, the music sounds different with all 110 musicians assembled within the studio space, necessitating a tweak here and there. And then, a take is recorded.

For the first cue of the day, there was perhaps more familiarity with the music than with other pieces. “Good morning, people,” says John Williams to the orchestra members. “We’ll start with TMS: the end credits.”

As all *Star Wars* fans know, the end credits sequence follows a very specific structure. With the iris out of the last frame of the film, there’s a triple-attack of brassy fanfare that kicks the music into the main title theme. The up-tempo rendition of the *Star Wars* theme—Luke Skywalker’s theme—continues until it is overtaken by a new theme. Then what follows is a reprise of the main themes of the film, before fading out or ending triumphantly.

With the end of Episode III serving double-duty as a finale to the entire saga, but also the end of the first trilogy, the end credits are slightly different this time around. They contain a major piece of music that otherwise has no place in Episode III.

After the fanfare of the main theme dies down, the glide of a harp segues into Princess Leia’s theme, now indelibly associated with the peacefulness of Alderaan, one of the final worlds seen in *Revenge of the Sith*. It is, perhaps, the most passionate and emotional cue in the entire *Star Wars* saga. In the recording session, when it builds to its final crescendo, Williams finishes to rousing applause and cheers of appreciation from the orchestra.

“It’ll be another 25 years before we do this again,” jokes Williams.

“That’s my goosebump fix for the session,” says Scoring Assistant Andrew Dudman.

As the end credits are always a montage of multiple themes, this cue is not recorded as one piece. Rather, Williams isolates the sections. He picks up the piece around measure 58, where the new *Revenge of the Sith* dueling theme appears. This then segues into a surprise, and not an unwelcome one.

The stately “Throne Room” from Episode IV, the music that accompanies the Yavin 4 awards ceremony, appears in the end credits. It’s the unedited version of the piece that is different from what appears in *A New Hope*. It’s been recorded as a concert piece this way: instead of the iris out to Episode IV’s end credits, it goes into a reprise of Princess Leia’s theme.

“We haven’t recorded it in this configuration here with this orchestra since the very first film,” says Supervising Music Editor Ken Wannberg.



STAR WARS BLOGS NOW TRANSMITTING ON HYPERSPACE

Right in time for the release of *Revenge of the Sith*, Hyperspace launched *Star Wars Blogs* for members who wanted to review the film, remark on fan activities, reveal their tactics in winning the Episode III video game, or just share memories of their favorite *Star Wars* saga moments.

To read more than 500 blogs covering such topics as the films, collecting, Expanded Universe, gaming, fan activities and more, visit blogs.starwars.com. Here is just a sampling of what has been posted so far. Log on today to start your own thread!

PREQUEL GENERATION QUESTIONS A NEW HOPE

By: Ghent

For years we’ve speculated what it might be like for the first generation of *Star Wars* fans who watch the saga “in order”: Episode I, II, III, and then IV, V, VI. For me, speculation became observation as my barely 7-year-old son watched *A New Hope* after having seen *ROTS* twice. My boy is very knowledgeable about the prequels, but hasn’t seen *ANH* since he was four. For all intents and purposes, this was like a “first viewing” for him.

Here is a selection of his many, many questions...none of which I had when I saw *ANH* at the age of six.

- After recognizing the *Tantive IV* corridor: “Hey, they didn’t have all those people in there before. Where did they get them?”
- Later in that same scene, “Are the Republic troops clones too? They all look the same.”

(Of course, by Republic troops he meant what we’ve always called Rebels. But being on an Alderaan ship...who is correct?)

- “Wow! Is the Death Star done already? I guess that’s how you know that a long time has passed.”
- “Look... Obi-Wan is pretending he doesn’t know R2-D2.”
- In Ben’s hut: “Where is Qui-Gon? I thought Obi-Wan was supposed to be training with him?”
- As C-3PO throws a Jawa body on the pile: “Do you think that R2-D2 started that fire with his jet rockets?”
- “How can the Emperor dissolve the Senate? Didn’t he destroy it trying to kill Yoda?”
- “Is Chewbacca the only Wookiee that survives the Clone Wars?” (This was said with great concern.)
- “So, does this mean that R2-D2 is really the main character in *Star Wars*?”
- And finally, though not prequel-provoked, “Why are red leader and gold leader the leaders? They don’t know what they’re doing....”

These are all making me think. What a blast seeing *Star Wars* with fresh eyes.

THE THINGS YOU DO WHEN YOU’RE A KID FASCINATED BY WOOKIEES AND X-WINGS

By: SolosGirl1

I’m not the only one with memories of a childhood filled with *Star Wars* moments, and after seeing Episode III again last night, I can’t help but reminisce. I remember when....

- I asked my mom over and over if she could fix my too-short hair into the style of my favorite princess. She braided and twisted my pigtails into two neat “buns”, though they were usually more the size of cupcakes.

- It would snow hard and for days on end. We'd rush to the corner lot where plows pushed the fallen snow into giant mounds, 10-feet high they seemed. And I would dig my trench, and hide in waiting. And then the ground shook. The Empire had landed. The Walkers were on their way.
- It was the night before Halloween and the costume prepared by my grandma was laid out neatly on my bed. Slightly scuffed white shoes, exquisite white dress, improvised silver belt, warm underwear (always cold on Halloween), rubber bands, bobby pins, hairspray, and lots of mom's makeup. Next to it all, a photograph of a perfect galactic princess.
- I peddled my bike as fast as I could up and down the block, ducking beneath low-hanging tree branches, my laser gun drawn, scout troopers on my left and right. Nagle Street became Endor for a day.
- On more than one occasion, an oversized cardboard box served as the cockpit of the Millennium Falcon. With a teddy bear in the co-pilot seat, I watched the approaching X-wings through the window cut with dull scissors. What do you remember?

TRIBUTE TO THE HERO OF STAR WARS: R2-D2

By: Hanbocca5

When you think about it, if it weren't for R2-D2, many events in Star Wars would have never taken place:

- *The Phantom Menace*: Let's see...Qui Gon, Obi-Wan, Padmé, and Anakin would all have been dead if Artoo would not have fixed the Naboo star cruiser...wait...Jar Jar would have died, too.
- *Attack of the Clones*: Padmé would have been a part of a battle droid's armor if it weren't for Artoo's last minute rescue...Anakin saying "We have R2 with us!" wasn't that far off.
- *Revenge of the Sith*: Artoo's fire starting abilities, elevator control, and his haywire distraction on the bridge of the *Invisible Hand* helped Anakin/Obi-Wan take care of their business. I imagine Artoo helping Threepio carrying Padmé back to her ship on Mustafar.

His childish screams and wails make Star Wars fun.



WEBDOCS

GOING TO THE DARK SIDE: HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

When Anakin Skywalker first stood before the Jedi Council as a nine-year old boy, Yoda laid out his future in a progression that began with fear and ended with suffering. The final steps of that journey will take place in *Revenge of the Sith*, with Hayden Christensen playing Anakin at the most important juncture in his life. George Lucas selected Christensen for his ability to play dark, and in this episode, the darkness will consume Skywalker as he becomes Darth Vader. Hear from Christensen as he undertakes this journey, with insights from crew and co-stars.



Hayden is very good at doing the dark side and he always has been. I chose an actor that has that presence of the dark side to work with as opposed to somebody who is very lighthearted and funny, and trying to get him to have a undercurrent of the dark side all the time."

—George Lucas, filmmaker

"The transition into the dark side was a lot of fun for me because it was where I was wanting to go from the very get-go. And I wasn't very sure at the time why I was asked to pull back but now I understand this because it has to take place at very specific points in this film."

—Hayden Christensen, actor/Anakin Skywalker

"The climax is Episode III where he actually does turn into Darth Vader, and he becomes the evil he's been trying to fight. And it's a fun story to tell because it is a story about how a good person turns bad." —George Lucas



"I think we got really lucky with Hayden. When he started on *Attack of the Clones* it could have been any young actor on Earth who was going to play that part. And now three or four years on—boy am I glad it was Hayden."

—Nick Gillard, swordmaster/stunt coordinator

"It's just a hell of a lot of fun. You're learning where your feet go, and how your body is meant to move and where your lightsaber connects with your opponent. And trying to absorb all this information that's being thrown at you, while retaining everything you learned the day before, and the day before that and the day before that. And piece it all together so that the fighting moves become a linear continuum. That's some of the most fun I can remember having in recent memory, just being there with Nick and Ewan, and bashing it out." —Hayden Christensen



"It's always exciting for an elder actor to work with a younger actor who has great talent. But I didn't know it would be quite as exciting as it turned out to be. And on certain scenes I thought we were really cooking."

—Ian McDiarmid, actor/Chancellor Palpatine



WEBCAM

Back on May 4, journalists from around the globe were invited to preview *Revenge of the Sith*, and then on May 5 participated in a session of roundtable interviews with such notables as George Lucas, Hayden Christensen, Ian McDiarmid, Rick McCallum, Rob Coleman, and Roger Guyett. Of course, starwars.com was there to capture all the action.





PHOTORECEPTOR

HOME ONE AT HOME (1)

The Mon Calamari cruiser model rests at the Lucasfilm Archives; the lamps that illuminate its drive thrusters are clearly visible.

VADER'S COMMANDS (2)

Lord Vader orders his troops to scour the *Tantive IV* for any signs of Senator Leia Organa and the stolen Death Star plans.

DECKED OUT (3)

Leia Organa points the sail barge's heavy laser gun towards its own deck to cover her escape.

REMATCH (4)

Almost 20 years later, Darth Vader (David Prowse) and Obi-Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness) pick up where they last left off.

DEFENDING THE LINE (5)

Rebel troopers vigilantly defend the trench lines, awaiting the arrival of Imperial forces.

PATH OF ADVENTURE (6)

A low camera angle reveals that the otherwise slick and slippery Death Star floors have been paved with a clearer path to accommodate action filming.

DEFLECTING DARTH (7)

In this unprocessed plate photography—lacking the lightsaber glow—Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) knocks Darth Vader (here, Bob Anderson) off balance.

*Edited by Bonnie Burton;
content by Pablo Hidalgo*





VOL. 14

BANTHA TRACKS

BY THE FANS.
FOR THE FANS.

CELEBRATING SITH

Anyone who is reading *Bantha Tracks* must know that *Revenge of the Sith*, the final big screen film of George Lucas' decades-spanning saga, premiered in theaters on May 19. *Star Wars* fans all over the world, eager to commemorate this remarkable point in movie and pop culture history, lined up, partied, and celebrated at theaters everywhere. Not only did fans report loving the film—"Sith ROCKS!"—they also enjoyed the fun and anticipation of waiting for this brand new *Star Wars* episode with other fans.

Bantha Tracks presents this worldwide *Sith* Scrapbook, with thanks to *Star Wars* fans everywhere who sent their contributions.



^ Brae Wyckoff remembers seeing *A New Hope* for the first time when he was six years old. To celebrate *Revenge of the Sith* Wyckoff and his son Tommy Modifica, pictured in the sleeping bag, camped out for more than five days at their local theater in San Marcos, California. The pair were interviewed by local news, and brought their 27-inch TV and DVD player so they could play the films and entertain others in line.

"It was just a huge *Star Wars* festival," says Wyckoff. "We had the best time hanging out with each other those several days and we were so excited to see the movie. To be the first out of 2,100 people to walk into the theater was amazing...there were seven screens showing *Star Wars* and all were sold out for the 12:01 a.m. shows."—Photos by Brae Wyckoff



^ Members of the San Francisco Fan Force, the self-proclaimed "Fun Side of the Force," teach younglings the finer points of posing with lightsabers as they wait for *Revenge of the Sith* at the Metreon Theater in downtown San Francisco.—Photo from Robert Lee



◀ It's good to be the Emperor. Jeremy Walker, costumed as Emperor Palpatine, enjoys the company of his royal court at the premiere screening in Destin, Florida.—Photo from Jeremy Walker



^ Georgia Star Wars fans made the most of the midnight premiere at the Regal Hollywood 24 in Chamblee. Master Replicas and Target were there, too, giving away Star Wars prizes and goody bags to the assembled fans.

"The Geek Squad" was there in full force," says Robert E. Bean, who is pictured here as Darth Vader. "They had a line of VWs and lists of prefab excuses for missing work the next day." Also pictured is Jeff McClure as Boba Fett.—Photo from Robert E. Bean



^ Star Wars fans in Costa Rica gathered at the Cine Magaly in San Jose on May 18, well in advance of the midnight premiere. Lightsaber duels, a costume contest, and speculation about the film filled the evening, and helped the hours until midnight pass quickly.—Photos by Jorge Angulo





▲ Matthew Tolosa, a member of the San Francisco Fan Force, garners support for his cause during pre-premiere campaigning at the Metreon.—Photo from Robert Lee



▲ Deborah Jacobs snapped this photo of Chewbacca, a Gamorrean guard, and the ever-plucky R2-D2 taking their walk on the red carpet at the Berlin, Germany premiere.—Photo by Deborah Jacobs



▲ Alex Chen (right), is pictured with his brother-in-law Calvin Tsang (Vader in jeans, left) at the Loews New Brunswick in New Jersey on opening night. Chen recommended this caption: "Always two there are. A master dressed in a deluxe Darth Vader costume and an apprentice dressed as an amateur."—Photo from Alex Chen



▲ It's Spokane, Washington! We don't need no stinking costumes! Matt Gibson, second from right, and friends lined up early to get the choice seats for *Sith* opening night.



< Common, although confusing to many, the tickets bearing 12:01 AM Wednesday, May 18 actually got fans in to see *Revenge of the Sith* at 12:01 AM on Thursday, May 19. This one admitted Casey Shem to a digital screening in San Francisco.

France



^ The Official *Star Wars* Fan Club of France celebrated the premiere of *Revenge of the Sith* with an official fan convention, opening with a spectacular *Star Wars* concert conducted by wunderkind Samuel Sene.—Photo from Antoine Michel



^ "The Middle Georgia *Star Wars* Fan Club lined up for three days to benefit the American Cancer Society," reports Charles Hansel, club president. "We called it 'Lineup for Life.'" Hansel adds that he and the group "look forward to the future of *Star Wars*."—Photo from Charles Hansel

FAN.TASTIC



Star Wars Droid Builders Make MAKE

The R2-D2 Builders' Group, an international group of talented and innovative *Star Wars* fans who build all styles of droids from the saga, was featured recently on the cover of *Make* magazine, Volume 2. Builders Alexander Kung, Craig Smith, and Kelly Knider, as well as an assortment of home-built astro and protocol droids, were featured in an article titled "R2-DIY: Extreme Bot Builders at Home."

Written for *Make* by Howard Wen and photographed by Dan Goldberg, the article follows the magazine's technological "Do-It-Yourself" line by interviewing the builders on the materials needed, and the costs, tricks, and challenges inherent in building droids at home. The builders also discussed some of the new technology and innovations that they have developed as a group to make the original design more useable.

The creators of a popular exhibit at both Celebration II and Celebration III, the droid builders are constantly improving their methods and technology. Many of their droids have seen a lot of action, from helping promote *Star Wars* at public events to cheering kids in children's hospitals.

What's next for the R2-D2 Builders? According to *Make* they are working on artificial intelligence for their droids. Look out! An Artoo that can tell the difference between a mindless philosopher and a scruffy-looking nerfherder can only mean trouble!

Dark Side? What Dark Side?

Three Darth Vaders, all of 501st Garrison Tyrannus, are determined not to be seduced by the dark side...or maybe by the extra large Junior Mints. Adam Kingsley of Norfolk, Virginia snapped this photo at the midnight premiere at the Virginia Commons Center.—Photo by Adam Kingsley



Bling Bling Disney Weekends



Fans enjoyed *Star Wars* Weekends at Disney's MGM Studios in May and June, where they could get an autograph from a Wookiee, hang out with a few Gamorrean guards, and meet stars from the cast and crew of the *Star Wars* films.

Kendall Helmstetter Gelfer, pictured here with one of the Gamorreans, made himself the big Vader bling by taking the head off a 12-inch limited edition Darth Vader giant Pez dispenser and attaching it to "the shiniest necklace I could find." This created, says Gelfer, "the most ostentatious *Star Wars* thing ever! The cool thing is the head also says a few things and the eyes glow as well."—Photos from Kendall Helmstetter Gelfer

EDITORIAL

I want to ignore it, but I just have to come out and say it. We Star Wars fans just celebrated the release of the last new Star Wars big-screen movie.

There, I got that off my chest. But that didn't make it much easier.

The Way We Were



When a nine-year-old Pete Vilmur, now a content provider for starwars.com, saw this Darth Vader he thought it was the best costume ever.

"I really thought it was an amazing costume at the time," recalls Vilmur, who is pictured on the left. "This was only five months after *Star Wars* came out. We had at least 15 kids on the street, and we were all *Star Wars* fans."

The Vader was a friend of one of Vilmur's neighbors, who decided to dress up and come down the block so the kids could have their pictures taken with him.

Vilmur has been an avid *Star Wars* fan since his first viewing as a nine-year-old. He is an ardent *Star Wars* collector, particularly of posters, and recently co-authored *The Star Wars Poster Book* with Steve Sansweet.

This past April was the last time I'll hear my friends agonizing over whether they should read the novelization first, or wait until after they see the film. (No matter what they tell me, I suspect they all read the novelization first, because it seems like they've read it within 6 hours of seeing the movie the first time.)

This summer is the last "summer of *Star Wars*" in which fans everywhere, myself included, will sneak to the theater every chance we get to see a new *Star Wars* film over and over on a big screen. No matter how good our home theaters are, there's nothing like a huge (especially digital) screen, a banging THX sound system, and a theater full of people cheering when Yoda drops the Imperial Guards like red rag dolls.

This past May was the last time my group of very close friends and I will get together to see a new *Star Wars* film. Ever since the Special Editions we have traveled from wherever we were living (Alaska, Switzerland, Guatemala, Chicago, Washington D.C....you name it) to see the films together. Our friendships will remain, but it was our mutual love for the saga that brought us together.

We at Lucasfilm have been repeating the mantra "*Star Wars* is Forever." We've been telling you that *Star Wars* will continue as long as you want it to. It's true. We intend to keep the story from a galaxy far, far away growing through television, books, comics, games, online, and other media. There are endless *Star Wars* stories left to tell, and we're eager to help keep them coming.

But this is a bittersweet moment.

Bitter, because it's the last new *Star Wars* film for the big screen.

Sweet, because what a film *Revenge of the Sith* kicks butt in a gut-wrenching, yet completely satisfying way. Almost 40 percent of those who answered a recent poll on starwars.com said that *Revenge of the Sith* was their favorite of the six films.

Those of us old enough to remember 1983 clearly recall our response when George Lucas announced that he was done making *Star Wars* films after *Return of the Jedi*, at least for the

foreseeable future. "What? No more *Star Wars*? No way!"

It's different now than it was at the "end" after *Return of the Jedi*. After Episode VI left the theaters almost everything *Star Wars* trickled away. *Star Wars* merchandise, novels, comics, even *Bantha Tracks* gradually left the scene. That's certainly not the case now. There's *Star Wars* on the horizon as far as we can see. *Bantha Tracks* and the Fan Club will continue, there is a long line of novels and comics already in the works, and plans for *Star Wars* television are underway.

But for right now, stop. Savor this moment in *Star Wars* history. You as a *Star Wars* fan are part of something that people will point to for years to come.

"That was the year that *Revenge of the Sith* came out. Remember that? It's my favorite of the *Star Wars* movies. Will there ever be a series of films like *Star Wars* again?"

I doubt it. I really do.

Mary Franklin
Mary Franklin
Editor, *Bantha Tracks*



Bantha Tracks Submission Guidelines

Any original art, envelope art, comics, illustrations, news, stories, meeting information, or any materials voluntarily submitted become the property of *Bantha Tracks*. No compensation will be given for voluntary submissions, and there is no guarantee of publication. Submissions to *Bantha Tracks* will not be returned. Each submission must include the creator's name, age, contact information, date the work was created, and a statement that the work is original, created by the person submitting it, and that the person is a member of Hyperspace: The Official *Star Wars* Fan Club. Send electronic files to banthatracks@insider.starwars.com, or send your snail mail to *Bantha Tracks*, c/o Mary Franklin, Lucasfilm, P.O. Box 10228, San Rafael, CA 94912.

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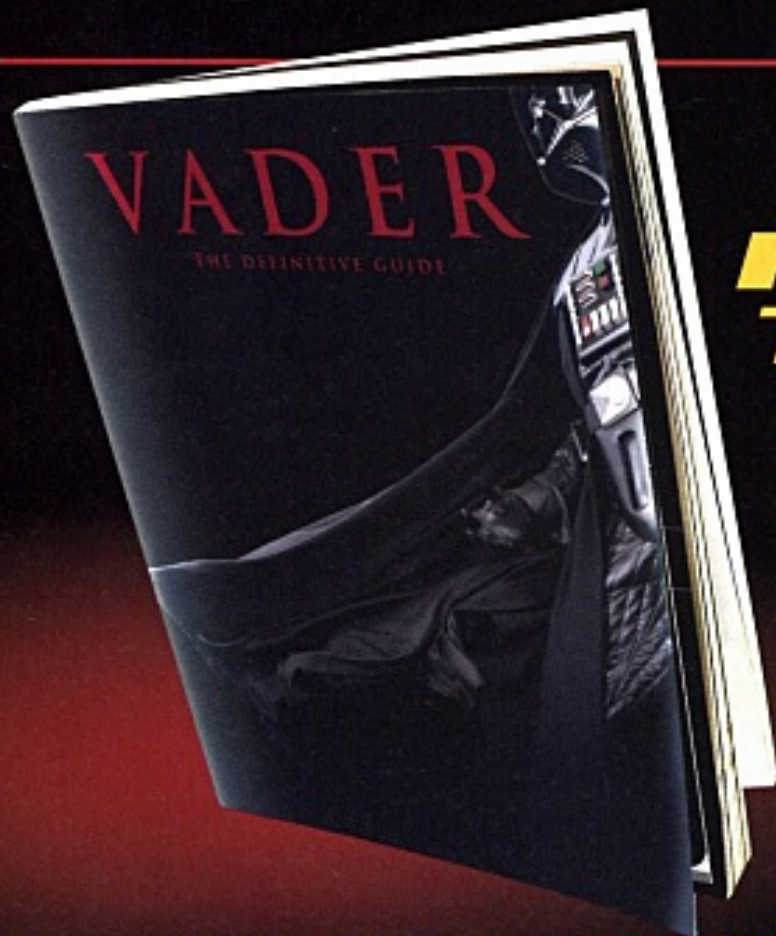
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COLLECTOR'S PICKS

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see page 6

#1



Name: Paula Rosenberg

Job: Public Health Advisor, Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program, CDCP.

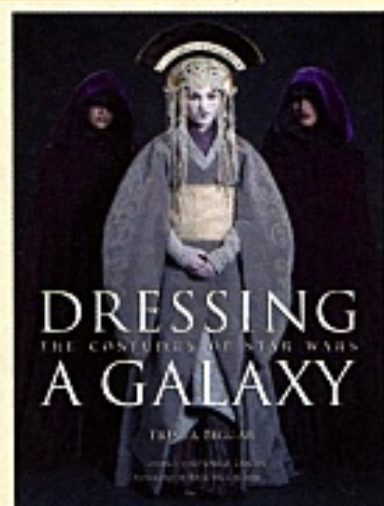
Collecting Star Wars since: 1977

Favorite area of collecting: Books.

Favorite Star Wars collectible: The gold-covered Star Wars: A New Hope movie tie-in paperback. It was what I read when my parents wouldn't let me see the movie.



#2



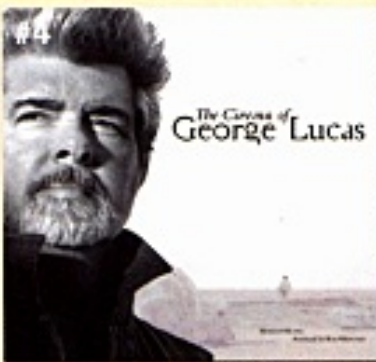
#1 Stormtrooper Lineup Adult T-Shirt \$19.99

"I love it when Star Wars clashes with our own world. Star Wars and chocolate is a great combination. Now you can let everyone else know that, too!"

#2 Limited Edition: Dressing a Galaxy by Trisha Biggar \$295.00

"This book is a dream reference come true for costumers. For me? I'm going to love staring at the fantastic design and artistry that went into the costumes. The special edition has some fantastic add-ons, including more pictures, a prop replica, a signed certificate from Trisha Biggar and a fancy case to hold your book and goodies. And, happily, those with a bit less budget can get just the book for a reasonable price."

#3



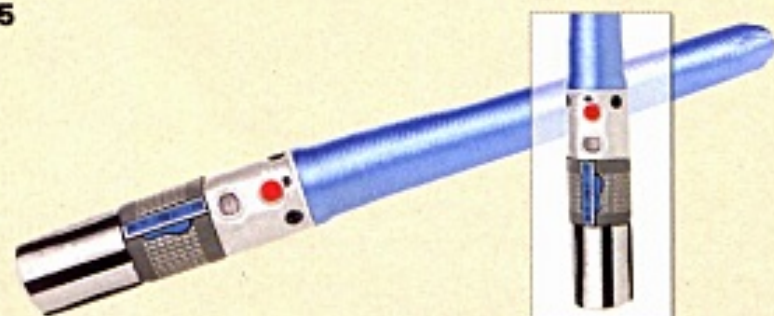
#3 Sculpted 3D Poster: A New Hope Version A \$79.99

"Photos just don't do these justice. I laid eyes upon them at Celebration III and was really impressed. The 3D sculpt really brings the poster design to life. Something to consider the next time you find yourself with a bit of extra collecting money."

#4 The Cinema of George Lucas by Marcus Hearn \$49.99

"If you're crazy for basically all films Lucas, this is a dream book come true. It is chock full of rare pictures and filled with great production stories and notes, including some great detail on some of his lesser-known work from his student days through to Episode III. This is a beautiful book to have and well worth the investment."

#5



#5 Blue Plush Lightsaber with Sound \$11.99

"Okay, so it's marketed to kids. But I think more adults will get this one. It's adorable and a lot of fun. We need more fun collectibles."

WHAT'S NEW

A



B



**A Exclusive Celebration III
Anakin/Vader 3D Lenticular**
\$29.99

Anakin transforms into Darth Vader in this 3D lenticular poster created exclusively for Celebration III. ☆

B Yoda Bobble Head \$16.99

This Yoda bobble head from England is the perfect kitsch accessory for your desktop or dashboard. ☆
(prototype pictured)

C



C R2-D2 Cookie Jar \$59.99

For the first time since 1978, R2-D2 is once again available as a cookie jar! ☆

**D Anakin Skywalker Lightsaber
.45-Scale Replica \$35.00 ☆**

A limited-edition replica that continues the high-demand collectible black chrome series. (prototype pictured)

E "The Trench" Artwork by John Alvin Price TBD

A beautiful work of art depicting a pivotal moment for the Rebel Alliance. ☆

E



D



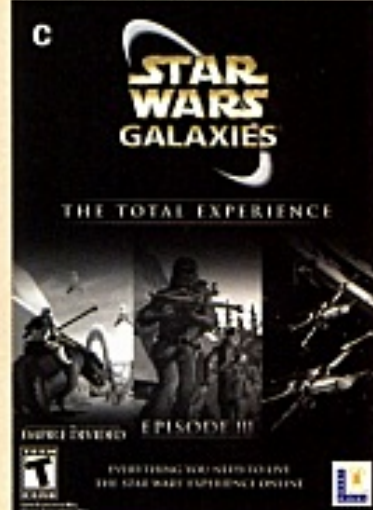
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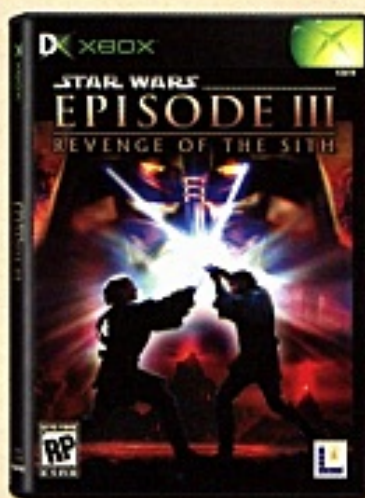


A Star Wars Mission: Lightsaber Battle Game \$71.99
Star Wars Lightsaber Battle Game is an interactive video game and includes a wireless lightsaber.

B Star Wars Plug & Play Video Game \$29.99
Revenge of the Sith game plugs directly into your TV and includes five different games.

C Star Wars Galaxies: The Total Experience \$29.99
Includes compilation pack of Galaxies games for the total online Star Wars experience. (For PC)

D Star Wars: Episode III Video Game \$49.95
Choose your side, follow the dark side or save the galaxy from darkness. (For PS2, Xbox, Nintendo DS, Gameboy Advance)



E Star Wars Battlefront II with Free Shirt \$49.95
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F Star Wars Saga Edition Chess Set \$39.99
Star Wars chess set includes collectible pieces of your favorite characters.



G Star Wars Risk: Clone Wars Edition \$34.99
This strategy game can be played with classic Risk rules or Clone Wars variations.

H LEGO Star Wars The Video Game \$39.99
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A Episode III 2005-2006 Student Planner \$10.99
Track and plan your day's activities with this spiral-bound Darth Vader planner.

B Darth Vader Backpack \$19.99
Backpack includes an embossed CD holder, padded back, and reinforced handle.

C Darth Vader Soft Square Lunch Kit \$14.99
Soft square lunch kit is perfect for going mobile with your lunches!

D 11-Piece School Set Price TBD
Vader's image adorns each component of this complete set of school tools.

E Yoda Plastic Lunch Box \$12.99
Collectible Yoda plastic lunchbox with insulated sport bottle.

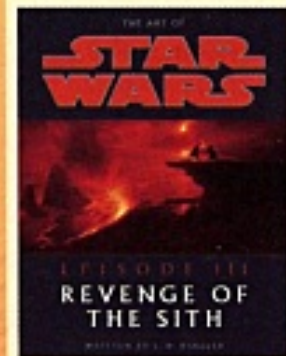
F LEGO 2-Piece Pen Set \$23.99
This 2-piece set features the latest "connect and build" pens from LEGO Writing Systems.

G Star Wars NASCAR Racing Jeff Gordon Kid's T-Shirt \$16.99
Star Wars Racing Jeff Gordon #24 Squad Leader t-shirt.

H Darth Vader Messenger Bag \$24.99
This hip messenger bag features stunning artwork of the Dark Lord and a convenient iPod case.



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A **Revenge of the Sith Logo Cap** \$16.99 ☆

B **Episode III Force Battler Figures 4-Pack, Assortment 1** \$54.99

C **Clone Trooper Bobble Head** \$16.99 (prototype pictured) ☆

D **Darth Vader Figurine Mug** \$19.99

E **Obi-Wan with Super Battle Droid Dlx. Figure** \$16.99

F **LEGO Clone Turbo Tank** \$89.99

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H **Star Wars Medallions 24-Piece Copper Set** \$54.99 ☆

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J **The Art of Star Wars: Episode III Signed by Jonathan Rinzler** \$39.99 ☆

K **Wooden Darth Vader Nutcracker** \$359.99 (prototype pictured)

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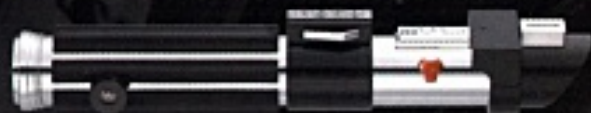
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